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Prologue

Time changed after what felt like moons after the sun's arrival.

SunClan went through many changes, some that were for good, and some that were for the greater good of their new home, only followed by the rules of **THE ABSOLUTE.**

Followed by the mistakes and trauma of the past, it took all ancestors to make a traditional system that was made to keep the balance of their warriors, to show that not everything can be as perfect as it seems, flaws are only natural to their lives, by the law of **destiny** to prove it. It is something not even the spirits themselves to overpower, but to **learn** from it, or as what it's expected by their rulers.

It only led to a spiral of grief, where love had nowhere to go but to wonder endlessly into darkness. The loss of a cat close to them could affect one or many. It is only by destiny that they can grow and learn from this. But it can only go so much far, until one's heart stop beating, and find its early trip to the graves. It's something the sunset wished, but the curse of it all is his immortality.

The brown, braided-striped tom sat there in a cliff above a dry land to where the incident took place. It was like a graveyard that he couldn't decorate because of the upper-beings new rules to never interact with one's destiny. He failed that and nearly caused the entire territory to die in fault of his selfishness. He couldn't bear to hear the troubled cries of his apprentice, his daughter, to fall for a fate that she had no control over. It broke him. It broke many that were even close to him. He had to remain strong and resilient, though it was hard to come from something that ruined him in the long run.

The glorious sun shined above the clouds, the birds chirping and the trees creaking in a peaceful rhythm. The ocean is still, and the mourning doves sung to the skies. Despite the chaos in the past and what could happen in the future, all he remembered was by the call

of the doves. The doves that helped create a signature tune to sing at one another when one's heart is lost. It was something for a father and daughter, that is. Red'fang sat there, with tears falling from his swollen eye lids and to the empty pond below him. He wanted to decorate the land in flowers and any source of nature that Little'shine enjoyed.

He wasn't the great and stoic sunset he once was to the mysterious Softpaws who had never met him or the other spirits who went through hardships to find power to be good, to do greater things and focus cats' lives that outweigh one's life it means to follow the law.

But, as one knows, not all things should be considered to be the right thing.

As the tom watched his grieving space in silence, he turned to see an old friend standing behind him. Her fur faded with the fluffy clouds that cushioned her like pillows. The large moon marking grew on her back, with glowing freckles that resembled the constellation. Her eyes were as bright as the stars, with her mythical aura causing the tom to feel a little drowsy being around her.

He does feel some kind of relief, though the sunset wished to be alone.

"Brooding again?" Jade'moon asks him, her tone quiet and often comes out as timid at times. Red'fang slowly turns his head, he hated admitting his vulnerability, but still reluctantly nodded at her question. "It is unfortunate." He takes a deep breath, trying to control his emotions when he takes a look at the dead fields one more time. "I don't believe that you're holding your emotions back, Red'fang. You haven't been well." Jade'moon teleports right next to him, making the tom flinch at times when she does that unexpectedly. "What do you know about me?" Red'fang glares at her, his muscles becoming tense. "I know what happened, and I try to do something about it. I keep my word here, and I'm not failing any longer."

"They're failing us." Jade'moon countered with his words, the pain

being evident on her face. "Nothing was ever your fault. I only denied becoming a spirit, so I wouldn't be responsible for this sick system. My only comfort is to guide those who are unlucky to a new life that only preserves it."

"This system is a balance. It's just the way life goes." Red'fang gruffly denies her words, still staring at space when his emotions die down to his regular sarcasm and dryness. "This territory needs a leader, and I'm responsible for its livelihood. Unless you want to go out the Stone way of living." Red'fang purred deeply from the humorous memories living in the island territory. Stone'star was rather an idiot. Jade'moon could agree in his words, but she never found the law of **destiny** to rule over one's life. She stood from her spot and turned around to walk away. "That may be accurate.." She says before turning her head. "But beware who you follow as your guide, they like see the world burn as long as they have **control** over it."

Then, she disappears in front of Red'fang's eyes, who was left in confusion of a cryptic message which he is used to if it's from Jade'moon. For some reason, it had significance over it, but he believed not now that he had found a grounding point with his own soul and nothing from all those moons ago in a broken territory.

Then, he hears the call of a crow above him, a reminder of one's shattered destiny.

Allegiances

TerraClan *This clan lives in the woodlands below the mountains. They are the only known clan who celebrate mating ceremonies and study astronomy. They are loyal, patient, and hardworking and value nature as a gift from SunClan. Their landmarks are the Fox Hideout, Terra's Hill, and the Tree of life. They share their strong genes as the wildcat. They're located in the southeast of the territory, and borders WaveClan and BlazeClan.*

Leader: Cedar'star - A diluted, cream-colored tabby she-cat with swirled stripes all over her body. She is also disabled with her broken right back leg. She wears a tightly wrapped vine around her thigh. She has dark brown eyes. Her apprentice is White'paw.

Deputy: Spruce'leap - A speckled, gray she-cat with brown ears and white paws. Her underfur is faded from light gray to white, and her eyes are dark brown. Her parents are Thicket'fur and Timber'frost.

Medicine cat: Wood'bark - A brown wildcat with yellow eyes. His only parent and mother are Terra'star. His closest stepfather and friend are Blaze'star. His apprentice is Fir'paw.

Medicine apprentice: Fir'paw - A gray bi-color tom with pale green eyes. His parents are Thicket'fur and Timber'frost. His mentor is Wood'bark.

Warriors:

Cherry'fang - A dark ginger tabby she-cat who looks similar to her uncle, Red'fang. She has orange eyes. She shares traits of a wildcat, such as having a broader size and sharp ear tips. Her parents are Blaze'star and Terra'star.

Fox'snout - A ginger tabby tom with a long muzzle and a black tail. His apprentice is Frog'paw.

Badger'snap - A black tom with a white mask and soles under his

paws. His mate is Skunk'hiss. He is the father of Wolf'kit and Swift'kit. He has hazel eyes.

Leaf'dapple - A diluted striped, cream-colored tabby with yellow eyes and floppy ears. Her eyes are brown. Her apprentice is Hare'paw.

Hickory'fawn - A tortoiseshell she-cat with dark brown eyes. Her sister is Russet'wish.

Russet'wish - A tortoiseshell she-cat with white speckles all over her body and has brown eyes. Her sister is Hickory'fawn.

Wren'feather - a dark cream-colored tom with white spots and a white lower jaw. He is the mate of Tawny'storm. He has amber eyes. He is the father of the twins Ember'kit and Amber'kit. His father is Mushroom'spots.

Grove'fern - A light-cream Persian tom with blue eyes.

Monty - A lanky, brown shorthair oriental tom with dark brown eyes.

Thicket'fur - A bushy gray and white tom with a striped tail and brown eyes. He is the father of Spruce'leap, and Fir'paw. His apprentice is Bear'paw.

Timber'frost - A gray striped, shorthair tabby she-cat with pale green eyes a lanky body. She is the mother of Spruce'leap and Fir'paw.

Apprentice:

Hare'paw - An albino, white tom with reddish eyes and a nicked ear on his left. His mentor is Leaf'dapple.

Frog'paw - A dark gray, mangy tom with dark orange eyes. His mentor is Fox'snout.

Bear'paw - A gray, spotted Highlander she-cat with blue eyes and a bob tail. His mentor is Thicket'fur.

White'paw - A white spotted, diluted tabby tom with green eyes. He is born with three legs instead of four. (Lost his front right leg). His mentor is Cedar'star.

Kits:

Squirrel'kit - A dark tabby she-kit with yellow eyes and a white tail. Her mother is Dove'poppy.

Owl'kit - A dark brown tabby tom-kit with white underfur and paws. He looks identical to his sister Squirrel'kit. His mother is Dove'poppy.

Wolf'kit - A black tom-kit with white speckles all over his muzzle and his body, he has amber eyes. His parents are Skunk'hiss and Badger'snap.

Swift'kit - A black she-kit with a cape over her white fur, and white speckled legs. She has hazel eyes. Her parents are Skunk'hiss and Badger'snap.

Queens:

Skunk'hiss - A tuxedo she-cat with a white bushy tail and amber eyes. She is the mother of Wolf'kit and Swift'kit. Her mate is Badger'snap.

Dove'poppy - A white she-cat with leaf green eyes and a long muzzle. Her kits are Owl'kit and Squirrel'kit.

Elders:

Boar'thrush - A dark brown torbie she-cat with orange eyes. She is the mother of Burning'tail and Flame'dance.

Birch'leg - A cream colored tom with brown stripes on his legs and half of his body. He has green eyes.

Oak'thunder - A dark tabby tom who has yellow eyes. He is the grandfather of Owl'kit and Squirrel'kit. His son died of a fallen tree.

BlazeClan *This clan lives out in the grasslands with fewer trees, their*

genes built to deal with hotter places. The cats are described to be fierce, courageous, and compassionate. They share powerful genes from the ancestors of the original SunClan as well as wildcat traits. Their landmarks are the Great Watering Hole, the Sun Cliff, and the Sunrise Shrine. They're located in the middle west of TerraClan, north of WaveClan's borders and the drowning place.

Leader: Sun'star - A ginger tabby with braided stripes and green eyes. He is the son of Terra'star and Blaze'star.

Deputy: Burning'tail - A pudgy black tabby she-cat with an orange tail. Her mother is Boar'thrush.

Medicine cat: Smoke'shade - A gray lykoi she-cat with pale yellow eyes. Her apprentice is Coal'paw.

Medicine apprentice: Coal'paw - A small, lanky, charcoal gray tom with pale green eyes. His father is Molten'throat. His mentor is Smoke'shade.

Warriors:

Fire'light - A lean, light-brown tabby she-cat with sharp ear tips, and a curled, bushy tail. Her eyes are orange. Her parents are Blaze'star and Terra'star.

Flame'dance - A largely striped torbie she-cat with amber eyes. Her mother is Boar'thrush.

Molten'throat - A charcoal gray cat with pale green eyes. His son is Coal'paw.

Ash'wind - A smoky gray tom with amber eyes and a bushy tail. He is half-blind on his left eye. His apprentice is Black'paw.

Spark'drift - A nearly furless, tall gray tom with floppy ears and brown eyes. His apprentice is Shrub'paw.

Rusty'claw - A large, ginger tom with green eyes and a mangled back, left paw. His mother is Golden'flame.

Crimson'leaf - A dark ginger she-cat with speckles of brown and

white all over her mangy fur. She has pale brown eyes. Her apprentice is Lizard'paw.

Yellow'petal - A lean, light ginger tom with dark brown eyes. he has white paws and a tail tip. His mother is Golden'flame.

Evening'shine - A dark brown Maine-coon tom with amber eyes. His half-brother and apprentice are Bramble'paw.

Sage'whisper - A sleek, light gray she-cat with dark grey splotches on her body.

Flint'stripe - A short, light gray van tom with black ears and tail. He has a long stripe that goes all the way down his back and to his tail. His eyes are gold yellow. His apprentice is Cinder'paw.

Apprentice:

Lizard'paw - A tan, cream tom with dark green eyes. He has brown ticked spots all over his pelt. His mentor is Crimson'leaf.

Shrub'paw - A fawn, cream calico she-cat with pale green eyes. Her mother is Maple'song. Her mentor is Spark'drift.

Cinder'paw - A dark gray she-cat with light green eyes. Her mentor is Flint'stripe.

Bramble'paw - A cinnamon tabby tom with yellow eyes. His mentor and half-brother are Evening'shine.

Black'paw - A white dappled black tom with dark brown eyes. His mentor is Ash'wind

Kits:

Amber'kit - A dilute torbie she-kit with dark gray stripes and amber eyes. Her parents are Tawny'storm and Wren'feather.

Ember'kit - A black and orange torbie tom-kit with orange eyes. His parents are Tawny'storm and Wren'feather.

Queens:

Tawny'storm - A torbie cat with a long muzzle, a large scar across her neck and orange eyes. She is the daughter of Boar'thrush, her mate is Wren'feather. Her kits are Amber'kit and Ember'kit.

Maple'song - A cinnamon calico she-cat with orange eyes. She is expecting kits. Her only daughter is Shrub'paw.

Elders:

Finch'pelt - A brown bi-color she-cat with folded ears and a lanky build. Her eyes are light green.

Tiger'talon - A mackerel brown tom with a burned face. He has green eyes.

Golden'flame - A light ginger she-cat with faded speckled dots and white stripes all over her body. She has pale yellow eyes. Her sons are Yellow'petal and Rusty'claw.

WaveClan *This clan lives in an underground crystal cave in front of the drowning place (beach). These cats are described to be intelligent, secretive, creative, wise, and determined. Their landmarks are the* ***Opal's Eye****, Dune Hill, and the Silvergaze. They are known in having knowledge of gemstones, life in the drowning place, and practice caving. Their descendants are the Tribe of Rushing Water and RiverClan. They're located in the southern part of the territory.*

Leader: Otter'star - A dark-brown colored Siamese with shaggy fur and green eyes. His parents are Doe'trot and Wave'star.

Deputy: Emerald'glare - A black, tuxedo tom with long muzzle and ears. He has deep green eyes that are reminded of the gemstone. His brother is Orca'paw.

Medicine cat: Oleander'cloud - A gray-point Siamese tom with green eyes. His parents are Doe'trot and Wave'star. His mate is Willow'splash.

Medicine apprentice: Ruby'paw - a reddish Somali cat with green eyes.

Warriors:

Needle'whisker - A dark brown tortie-point she-cat with blue eyes. Her parents are Doe'trot and Wave'star.

Mist'breath - A lean, gray-point Siamese she-cat with a bushy tail. She has blue eyes. Her mate is Gale'star. Her parents are Doe'trot and Wave'star. Her kits are Silver'mist, Coral'shine, and Cloud'pool.

Lily'flight - A gray tabby she-cat with green eyes. She is the former mate of Web'star, the mother and mentor of Poppy'paw.

Water'step - A classic tabby gray tom with blue eyes. His mate is Sea'pounce. His son is Dune'kit. He is Orca'paw's mentor.

Willow'splash - A chimera she-cat with black on the right side of her face and cream on the left side. She has black splotches and dark cream stripes all over her body. Her left eye is blue, and her right eye is yellow. Her mother is Quiet'ripple. Her mate is Oleander'cloud.

Onyx'foot - A golden Bengal tom with copper brown eyes.

Pearl'nose - A white, tom with greenish-yellow eyes. His apprentice is Koi'paw.

Ripple'slash - A dark gray to light cream tom with stripes on his back and his legs. His mate is Coral'shine.

Cloud'pool - A shaggy, gray point Siamese tom with stripes on his legs. His parents are Mist'breath and Gale'star.

Flood'burst - A light gray tom with light blue eyes. His apprentice is Sapphire'paw.

Coral'shine - A lilac point, cream-colored she-cat with a nose stripe. Her parents are Gale'star and Mist'breath.

Quiet'ripple - A diluted tabby with white paws and a white mask and yellow eyes. She is the mother of Shell'paw and Willow'splash. Her apprentice is Shell'paw.

Apprentice:

Poppy'paw - An ivory gray, spotted tabby she-cat with green eyes. Her parents are Lily'flight and Web'star. Her mentor is her mother. She inherited her father's webbed paws.

Koi'paw - A slim, calico she-cat with pale green eyes. Her mentor is Pearl'nose.

Shell'paw - A cream-colored tom with speckled white dots all over his back, and brown stripes on his legs and tail. His mother and mentor are Quiet'ripple.

Orca'paw - A tuxedo black tom with yellow eyes. His brother is Emerald'glare, his mentor is Water'step.

Sapphire'paw - A small, blue short-haired Abyssinian she-cat with long lanky arms. Her mentor is Flood'burst.

Kits:

Fish'kit - A cream, ticked tabby tom-kit with blue eyes. His mother is Clam'rage.

Eel'kit - A skinny, cream-colored she-kit with blue eyes with white speckles on her face. Her mother is Clam'rage.

Dune'kit - A diluted tabby she-kit with braided stripes and white legs. His parents are Sea'pounce and Water'step.

Queens:

Sea'pounce - A diluted tabby she-cat with white splotches all over her fur and her tail. Her mate is Water'step, her only living kit is Dune'kit.

Clam'rage - A snappy, large she-cat who is a dilute tortoiseshell. She is blind on both eyes, and his scarred from past battles. Her kits are Fish'kit and Eel'kit.

Elders:

Sand'heart - A white tom with light ginger splotches with stripes.

Tidal'gleam - A grayish-'blue' she-cat with light cream spots and large white swirls and stripes all over her body. She has yellow eyes.

Beach'foot - A white and cream bi-color striped tom with green eyes.

BreezeClan 💨 *This clan lives in the mountains above the waterfall. These cats are described to be bold and resourceful. They are prideful and always look out for others and their well-being. Their strong physical bodies and genes are descended from Pallas' cats. They are largely ambitious of their goals and will never back down until their needs are met. Their landmarks are the Fallen Cliff, a ceremonial burial of their clanmates, the Training Lake, and the Snowclaw, the tallest mountain of the territory. They're located in the northwest of the territory.*

Leader: Gale'star - A large charcoal tabby cat with yellow eyes and a bushy tail. His mate is Mist'breath. His sons are Silver'mist and Cloud'pool.

Deputy: Silver'mist - A silver-point Siamese tom with stripes on his legs and a large, leaner body. He has blue eyes. His parents are Gale'star and Mist'breath.

Medicine cat: Hail'glow - A calico, Japanese bobtail cat with amber eyes. (NONBINARY)

Medicine apprentice: North'burn - A smoky gray cat with ice-blue eyes. (NONBINARY)

Warriors:

Silent'scatter - A dark gray, snowshoe she-cat with pale green eyes.

Lynx'ear - A spotted, bobtail gray tabby tom with floppy, sharp ears and large paws. His eyes are yellow.

Eagle'call - A shaggy, brown tom with a large white tear from his lower jaw to the middle of his belly. His eyes are green. His father is Moose'trot.

Moose'trot - A large, brown Norwegian forest cat with pale green eyes. His son is Eagle'call and Aster'orchid.

Raven'dart - A lean, jet-black tom with a large cape. His eyes are orange.

Ice'shatter - A white she-cat with gray van markings and large white dots. She has light yellow eyes. Her brother is Hill'gaze.

Hill'gaze - An all-white tom with dark brown eyes. His sister is Ice'shatter.

Rock'shard - A gray and white speckled tom with a long muzzle and ears. His eyes are dark blue.

Cliff'skip - A light gray she-cat with large splotches of both white and black. She has protruding fangs and blueish-green eyes. Her mate is Peak'tumble. She is the mother of Ridge'paw.

Peak'tumble - A brown, mackerel tabby tom with a crooked jaw. His eyes are yellow. His mate is Cliff'skip. He is the father of Ridge'paw.

Aster'orchid - A light ginger tabby she-cat with spiky, messy fur, and stripes. She has green eyes. Her father is Moose'trot.

Frost'face - A large white Persian tom with longhair and big paws. His eyes are yellow. His son is Sleet'paw.

Apprentice:

Sleet'paw - A dark gray, speckled Persian tom with grayish eyes. His father is Frost'face.

Ridge'paw - A gray, mackerel striped tom with blue-green eyes. He has a crooked jaw. His parents are Peak'tumble and Cliff'skip.

Snow'paw - A fuzzy, lilac-tortie point siamese tom who is disabled with a broken left hind leg. He has blue eyes.

Kits:

Valley'kit - A tall mackerel torbie she-kit with amber eyes. Her

mother is High'runner.

Sheep'kit - A fluffy white tom kit with white fur black muzzle and legs. He has amber eyes. His mother is High'runner.

Queens:

High'runner - A small torbie she-cat with green eyes, her kits are Sheep'kit and Valley'kit. Her mother is Alpine'willow.

Elders:

Alpine'willow - A massive cinnamon torbie whoever expresses masculinity. Her daughter is High'runner, her mate is Bear'growl.

Bear'growl - A large, longhaired chocolate-brown Persian tabby she-cat with gold eyes. Her mate is Alpine'willow. Her adoptive daughter is High'runner.

SunClan☀ *An ancient clan that is the home of the deceased warriors. They are ruled by a league of cats that specialize in guarding all territories around earth, managed by the sun itself.*

Leader (1): Red'fang - A brown, red-eyed, colossal tabby Maine coon tom. He is muscular and has dark brown braided stripes all over his body. He also has white socks and a small white tear on his throat and muzzle. He has a large red sun marking on his back. His brother is Blaze'star. (COMIC/ATSV!Miguel inspired.)

Leader (2): Blaze'star (light) - A light, ginger tom with fiery orange eyes. He has curled ears and large, braided stripes. He also has a sun marking on his right shoulder, the same as his brother's. His sharp tail emits a radiant glow that produces fire and smoke everywhere he goes. His mate is Terra'star. His kits Sun'star (blaze), Cherry'fang, and Fire'light. His stepson/kit is Wood'bark.

Leader (3): Breeze'star (used to be named Avalanche) - A large and pudgy gray spotted Pallas cat with pale yellow eyes. He is the founder of BreezeClan.

Leader (4): Terra'star (Leaf Dawn) - A short, broad she-cat who is a breed of a European wildcat with speckled brown fur and green eyes. She is the founder of TerraClan and the mate of Blaze'star. Her kits are Sun'star (blaze), Cherry'fang, and Fire'light. Her only son is Wood'bark.

Leader (5) Wave'star (used to be named Mono) - A tall, skinny Siamese tom with baby blue eyes. He is the founder of WaveClan. His mate is Doe'trot. His kits are Mist'breath, Oleander'cloud, Needle'whisker, and Otter'star (spark).

Warriors:

Jade'moon - A green-eyed, pudgy charcoal Maine coon with a long fluffy tail. She has a grayish-white moon marking on her back, with freckles all over her body that represented stars and constellations. (RAHHH NEW DESIGN)

Web'star (belly) - A dark-gray, mackerel tabby with brown eyes and webbed paws. He is the former leader of WaveClan and the former 'hero' mentioned of the original prophecy before being killed by the Saviors. His mate is Lily'flight, and his daughter is Poppy'paw.

Dew'star (belly) - A light gray, shaggy-furred tom who was a leader of WaveClan before being preceded by his nephew, Web'star. He was killed by a group of scavengers (dogs). His mate is Rain'bird.

Rain'bird - A Russian blue she-cat with yellow eyes, she is the mate of Dew'star. Her nephew is Web'star. She died from a white cough.

Ghost'paw - A gray she-cat with white and black dapples all over her body and face. Her eye lids are black. She is one of the living cats with special privileges to the living and dead. Her father is Otter'star.

Bloom'moss - A former StarClan she-cat who has a pale cream-colored pelt with blotched, pale brown stripes all over her body. Her front paws are white. She died during the early era (DOTC - YBF) of the forest territories from white cough.

Scorch'teeth - A dark gray blotched tabby she-cat with copper-

colored eyes. She died during the war of IceClan and SunClan.

Shingle'star - A slender, gray she-cat with spots that looked like pebbles. She has dark brown eyes. She died from being killed by Ice'watcher.

Dune'gale - An athletic built tom with a cream-colored fur, he is a tabby shown from the stripes all over her fur. He died from drowning.

Primrose'dawn - A tan, cream-colored tom with blotched stripes. He died of starvation.

Mushroom'spots - A heavily spotted, dark cream tom who is thick furred. He died from a badger attack.

Doe'trot - A shaggy, gray tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes. She is the mate of Wave'star. Her kits are Mist'breath, Otter'star (spark), Needle'whisker, and Oleander'cloud. She died of green cough.

Fern'flame - A dark brown, chocolate tortoise shell she-cat with yellow eyes. She died during the IceClan and SunClan war.

Jerboa'dart - A dark tan, slender tom with a black spot over his back. He has a long muzzle and ears. He died from an infected wound.

Sand'paw - A darker cream-colored she-cat who is the younger sister of Dune'gale. She died during the war with IceClan and SunClan.

Flare'eye - A white, skinny tom with orange eyes. He died from rogues. He was a clan member of BlazeClan.

Glide'star - A silver tabby she-cat with dark gray spots, yellow eyes, and a bobtail. She retired and died of old age. She was a leader of BreezeClan.

Vulture'glide - A large, brown color point tom with hazel eyes. He died of old age.

Softpaws 🐈‍⬛ *Cats that* live *in the twoleg nests.*

Jeffrey - A black tom with orangish-yellow eyes, a long muzzle, and a white tail tip. He is the father of Sunflower and Dandelion. He also has webbed paws. He wears a green collar.

Carmen - A chocolate brown tabby she-cat with yellow eyes. She is the mother of Sunflower and Dandelion.

Dandelion - A tiny, chocolate tortie she-cat with yellow eyes. Her parents are Jeffrey and Carmen.

Sunflower - A slender, black 'Ghost tabby' tom with pale yellow eyes, faint stripes on his backside, belly, and webbed paws. He wears a red and black striped collar. His parents are Jeffrey and Carmen. (PROTAG)

Lee - A chubby, light ginger tom with orange eyes. He wears a blue bandana over his neck.

The Saviors ● *A rogue group with Anti-SunClan beliefs, run by a violent exile.*

Leader: Storm'strike - A broad, large gray tabby tom with amber eyes. He has a large dark gray stripe on his neck and back. He has a nasty, rigid scar on his right eye.

Deputy: Dusk'prowl - A tall, black tom with pale blue eyes and white paws. He has faint stripes on his backside. He wears a black bandana on his neck.

Warriors:

Jet - A dark gray, furless tom with a long muzzle, and an intimidating height. He has dark brown eyes.

Bigwig - A messy, pale brown striped tom who is the largest of his group. He has mattered, bushy fur. He has light yellow eyes.

Spots'eye - A largely speckled white and black tom with a black face mask. He has yellow eyes.

Rouge'dust - A dark, rusty cinnamon she-cat with pale green eyes. She has large splotches of dark cinnamon and light cinnamon.

Parsnip'sting - A tall calico she-cat with mattered fur. She is heavily scarred and has folded, curled ears. Her eyes are light yellow.

Cream - A light cream, diluted tabby with a burnt face on her right side. She has green eyes.

Night'shadow - A dark Russian blue she-cat with yellow eyes. Her daughter is Inky. Her mate is Sorrel.

Sorrel - A dark brown tabby with large swirls on his body and white freckles. He is the mate of Night'shadow. The father of Inky. He has green eyes.

Inky - A Russian blue she-cat who is in apprentice age. Her eyes are colored pale green. Her parents are Sorrel and Night'shadow.

Prune'fur - A lanky, lilac-coated she-cat with dark brown eyes.

Wasp - A light ginger tom with black ear tips. His eyes are green.

Johnny - A dark cream tom with pale yellow eyes. He has a curled, broken tail and wears a spiked, emerald green collar.

Goblin - A hairless, gray sphinx tom with nicked eats and bulging, yellow eyes.

Patchy - A chocolate tortoiseshell tom with one blind eye on his right side. He also has a bobtail.

Rat - A tiny, gray she-cat with a bobtail, white ears, muzzle, and paws.

Maggot - A skinny, malnourished white cat with blue eyes. He is partially deaf.

Moonie - A black and white chimera she-cat with a split on her face. Her left side is black, and her right side is white. She has blue eyes on the right, green eyes on the left.

Silvia - A pale brown tom with a white hind cape and splotches. His eyes are pale blue.

Sully - A large German Shepherd male dog who has the ability to speak cat.

Warrior Code

(This is insanely useless to read through, but I thought it'll be fun to make my own.)

1: Defend the territory at all times, even with your life. The founders ensure that no clan falls behind.

2: With special permission, clans are able to roam on other territorial grounds for desperate needs. (EX: Limited prey, shelters, two-leg invasions, etc.)

3: Elders, kits, and queens must be fed before apprentices and warriors unless with permission.

4: Prey is only killed to be eaten. Anything wasted will be reused.

5: A kit must be at least ten moons to become an apprentice.

6: Newly appointed warriors will complete three tasks during their vigil.

7: To become a deputy, voting must be settled to test leadership and loyalty of a warrior.

8: The deputy will become clan leader after the leader dies, retire, or exiled. During the ceremony, the ancestors will test their loyalty before lives are given.

9: After the deputy dies, retire, or exiled, voting will restart in sunhigh.

10: Gathering of all clans start at the break of dawn in the four stones. Friendships, alliances, and festivals are encouraged. Battles are prohibited.

11: SunClan will assign clan patrols across each border to ensure that no enemy sets foot onto the territories. Peaceful negotiations are

necessary if the trespasser isn't a problem. The founders encourage that all cats are welcome.

12: No warrior will neglect or discriminate against other clan members, even if they are not purely forest-blood.

13: Clan leaders are able to add additional warrior codes UNLESS it affects the rights of their clan. Then the code will not be placed.

14: An honorary warrior does not need to kill to win their battles, unless it is necessary for self-defense.

15: A new clanmate is encouraged to reject their past life as a softpaw or a rogue of their own choice.

ADDITIONAL CODES

A warrior can have a lover from another clan, only if the leader of that clan gives them permission.

A medicine cat is able to have mates and kits, but the apprentice will have to be trained thoroughly if their mentor retires.

Chapter 1, *Part* 1

(TW: mention of cat birth!)

Part 1: **Family Ties**

There lived a twoleg nest on the cliff above the forests. Ran by an elderly twoleg mates who housed cats. They only did that to fill in the void of their son, who had died at a young age. To honor his memory, they named one cat after his favorite song that he liked. Sunflower.

The young tom lived in the Softpaw nest ever since he was born. He lived with his two parents, Jeffrey and Carmen, and his friend, Lee.

At a bright, sunny morning. Where the sun shined through the open blinds into the living room where the couch was set under the ledge of the window. Sunflower is woken up by painful yowls from upstairs. He could recognize it as his mother since she had been pregnant for a while. Lee pawed Sunflower by the arm.

"Come upstairs!" He begged, tugging his friend's tail.

"I'm coming! I'm coming! Just wait a second!" He spoke in his upbeat, energetic voice.

The black tom leaped from the window and scurried upstairs, his small legs speeding to the bathroom. He could see the female two-leg's shadow from the bathroom lights. The yowling of his mother continued, Sunflower thought she may be in trouble. Lee trailed behind, and the two cats were met with Jeffrey leaning against the yellow striped walls of the hallway, watching his mate carefully.

Jeffrey heard the jingling of the collar and turned around to see his son worried. "Don't enter just yet. Let your mother have some space." Said Jeffrey, his tail swaying slowly. The tom frowned. He understood that this was a very prominent time for his mother. He

had no choice but to watch.

To ease tension, the tom turned to his father. "Did you get any sleep, dad?" He asked, noticing the eye bags on his face. "If only I could. Your mother's been bugging me all night. She was worried if this could be a repeat of last time."

Sunflower gazed at his father. "Last time?" He questioned. *What could this mean?*

Jeffrey saw the look at his son. "You'll learn when you get older." He said, turning his face away to watch Carmen. He didn't feel as if this would fix his curiosity, but he had to shake that off for now.

The yowling stopped, there were only one mew coming behind the door. Jeffrey entered; Sunflower stayed. "Is she okay?" Lee asked. He peeked his head curiously. "Maybe give Mama some privacy, would you?" Sunflower gently batted his friend's fuzzy face. Lee scoffed. "Fine, fine." The ginger tom turned his head away. Sunflower purred in satisfaction. "Good, we can turn our heads together." He joins his friend by turning his own head. "You're treating this like a prison." Lee joked. The black tom bumped his shoulder. "Quit being dramatic, that's called basic decency. You little dirt."

"I know, I know. I'm not stupid like the outsiders. They seem to be high off the catnip." Lee said, which puzzled the tom. "Catnip? Psshhh.." He rolled his yellow eyes. That sounded silly, although he was admittedly interested since he had seen some outsiders' days ago. "I do wonder if there's more to the outside than... here." His tone went quiet and subtle.

"What?" Lee stared in disbelief. "You want to be with the catnip cats?"

"Nooo!" Sunflower turned his head, denying what he said. "You're missing the point here. I didn't say I wanted to go. Who knows what's out there?"

Lee shook his head. "You say that every time and then turn around just to go out again. You almost got killed last time when that

happened."

"Hush!" The black tom growled. "You'll get me in trouble if dad finds out!"

The door opened. It was the female twoleg who noticed them. She had a dark brow. skin and worn a striped, orange blouse shirt. Her hair was curly, and she wore dark, orange jeans. Her grayish hair was wrapped in a bun. "My, my, the kitties are curious." The twoleg spoke, her eye bags showed how exhausted she was.

Sunflower and Lee purred at her, begging to see the newborn kits. A frown was seen from the twoleg who felt guilt. They were excited, so she opened the door and let the cats in. The black tom eagerly entered only to see his mother sleeping on top of the pale orange blanket, Jeffrey didn't seem all upset, though the other kits just didn't make it.

Their expressions changed when two of the kits from their litter had come out stillborn. Only one had lived, and that outweighed the disappointment. Sunflower noticed the small kit, smelling the scent of his new kin. Carmen had birthed his younger sister. The kit mewed. She could smell the honey scent of her brother, who was inspecting her. The two of them touched noses for the first time.

"Oh my, mama. She's beautiful, isn't she?" Sunflower mewed, his nose rubbing against her fur. Carmen ran her muzzle against her son's forehead. "She's lucky." Said the she-cat. "I think Dandelion is a good name." She chirped at her son. Sunflower looked closely at his new sister, and he nodded in agreement. He turned to his father, who was looking at the two. "It's a perfect name." Jeffrey purred. He was proud of his mate. "She's going to be our priority, Sunny."

"I'll snap a tail at anyone who puts a paw on my sister!" He jumped up, baring his teeth playfully. "Just you wait..."

Jeffrey huffed. He was humored by his son's determination. "Don't go too far. I want you to be in one piece." He said, licking his son's head. "I worry too much for you sometimes. Especially with you interacting with the outsiders."

"I won't!" He hopped from the floor excitedly. "Mark my words! I'm not with all of that exploring stuff anymore."

His father led out a hum. "Good. I don't want you to be outside alone. It's dangerous out there. Now go on." He ordered. "Your mother needs a break."

What his father said made him somewhat annoyed. However, it wasn't really a big deal, right?

He leaned his head towards his sister and nudged her by the muzzle. "I'll see you later, little one." He promised, and then backed away from the bathroom and ran downstairs with Lee. *She's precious, I hope I can see her out and about soon.* He thought.

As he walked back into the living room, he noticed something staring directly at him outside the window. A gray tabby with a long muzzle had his white, gleaming eyes on him. Sunflower had a feeling of similarity. But he ignored it for now.

He continued on to play with his toys with Lee.

Chapter **2**

The crickets chirped loudly as the night settled. The clear skies were filled with tiny dots of stars twinkling above the pale blue house. Sunflower was infatuated to the outer world for some reason. He wished his father wouldn't be overbearing to him sometimes. He couldn't be allowed outside under **any** circumstances, and that aggravated him just a tiny bit.

He swiveled around to see his friend Lee, sleeping on his own bed. His parents were sleeping upstairs to keep his little sister company. He had the house all to himself.

Sunflower got off the window ledge and padded to the door where a tiny door was on the bottom.

The forbidden door. My papa doesn't even let me go through it.

He looked peeped at the ginger tom sleeping. He was hoping that Lee didn't catch him sneaking out again.

Sunflower took off running, exiting out of the cat door. Without looking where he headed, he immediately slipped on the dirt and fell all the way to the bottom of the steep hill. "Uff!" The tom grunted, roughly falling onto his belly and mildly hurting his lower jaw.

"That- hurt-... ugh-!" Sunflower moved his body, the pain numbing as it comes and go. All it resulted was some dirt staining his shiny pelt. He quickly shakes it off and keeps on running. He missed the cool air and the serenity of the quiet forest. He missed stargazing out in the woods. He never knew why his father didn't trust him to be out all by himself. Maybe it was a safety thing, but there was more to it than he thought.

When he sat down in front of the large monster behind him that the

two-legs owned, he noticed a cat sitting on the roof of the shed. He noticed how awfully similar he appeared in the tom's eyes.

"Peter?" Sunflower muttered. The gray tom huffed, letting out a sudden chuckle. "I'm surprised you remember, kid."

That's when he knew it was the same tom with his raspy, casual voice. "No dirt!" Sunflower jumped up and started to climb on the two parked monsters, and up to the roof of the shed. "I thought you disappeared forever!" He paced in front of him. Sunflower was excited to see the tom that saved him. Peter paused. He was forgetting that Sunflower didn't see him with those cats. "I... uh..." He looked away. "I died."

The black tom's face instantly turned into shock. "What?" He responded, tilting his head. It pained the gray tabby to tell the truth. "I died while saving you, kid. It didn't end well with me." He shook his head slowly. It made Sunflower realize that he wasn't speaking to a hero, but he was also speaking to a **ghost**. He didn't know how to act; death was always a terrifying thing in his eyes. "Don't pay too much attention." Peter nudged the small tom. "You can always look through the silver lining. I'll still be here, but just not much, kid."

Sunflower frowned, turning his head. "You're completely normal with that? With the fact that you look like you just got fed to a dog?" He responded, scowling at the tall tabby. "Hey, hey! The dog part did happen. But I want to at least see you since you're the last cat I've ever seen." He spoke in a stern voice. "Maybe you'll be fine with a ghost friend, eh?" He gently nudged Sunflower's shoulder, but that didn't really budge him as much.

"You'll probably be the only friend I have that's way beyond my papa's standards." Sunflower's eyes had a hint of sorrow. Peter looked at the small tom. "You don't have any friends? Your elders are kind of strict." The gray tabby looked almost concerned for him. "Lee's probably the only friend he'll let me have." Sunflower looked at the sky. "But sometimes it's kind of... boring in that house."

"Hm." Peter looked at the sky. "It's too much to keep your son in the house all the time. There's lots of stuff out there that you haven't

seen."

Sunflower glanced at him, vaguely moving his head. "What have you've seen?" He asked, his ears perked up out of interest. "I came from a land of wild cats." The ghostly tom said, he sits down besides Sunflower. "There were four large clans that live individually in their own right, in their own territories. They're unique and wild. But they're not THAT friendly to outsiders. Look at the forest territories."

Sunflower moved closer to the tom, and his large pupils stared at him like an apprentice to a mentor. "What were the names? How did they live?" He questioned. The tabby cat purred in amusement. His muzzle brushed the black tom's ears to comfort him. "They were named after their founders, and their traits were easily recognizable. BlazeClan for their courage, TerraClan for their loyalty, BreezeClan for their strength. And the best for last, WaveClan, for their intelligence. Though it does sound a little bit pretentious, I admit."

The black tom snorted in laughter. "Oh really? What's it like being part of WaveClan? Or any of the clans?" Peter's face changed slightly. "It isn't all sunshine and rainbows when joining clans. You'll either find a friend, a mate, or foe. You just never know. Although, clan life... isn't entirely bad. Some may not be fit for the lifestyle and the specific rules you're forced to follow."

"Sounds like my dad." He remarked, rolling his eyes. "He always told me about outsiders sharpening their claws with hare skulls. Doesn't that sound weird when you think about it?" He glances at Peter, but also just now noticing his star mark on his forehead. The tabby stopped, finding hesitancy to say something to that idea. "I-mean... he isn't entirely wrong. But he makes us seem like were rabid."

"Exactly!" Sunflower mewed in agreement. "I'm not a kit anymore. I can hunt my own mouse; I can do anything!" His delivery made him seem somewhat spoiled in Peter's eyes, but it was humorous. "Now, now. You aren't invincible, but you're quite stubborn. Do you really think you can take on the wilderness, kid?" He teased. It made Sunflower angrier; he had a pouty-like face. Though, he couldn't

deny about him not being fully born in the wilderness. "Not... really." He muttered.

"Hm." Peter hummed. "I could maybe let you explore with me tomorrow night, I'll make sure to bring you back before sun high, how does that sound?"

Sunflower's eyes grew wide. "Really? You're going to take me out?"

"Mhm." The gray tabby nodded in approvement. "But I don't want any Softpaw shenanigans from you. These cats are super important, especially the leaders... the spirits, even though they accept someone like you, it all goes by first appearance." The tom warned. "You got that? Kid?"

Sunflower's yellow eyes had that innocence to it. Though, for some reason he felt unsure if he wants to accept. Did he really belong in the forest? He's too socially awkward to meet with new cats besides his own crew back in the house. How will he survive? He could feel his heart pump a little just from being around with too many cats.

"Okay." The black tom reluctantly accepted. "Same place?"

"Same place." Peter said. "I'll see you."

Sunflower purred at him, watching the ghost fade off from existence. He then went back to the house into the open window. But he did feel as if there was something or someone watching him from afar.

Chapter 3

At the break of dawn, the sun shined on his black, short pelt. Sunflower raised his head, noticing the smell of breakfast food coming from the female two-leg. The food sizzled softly when the elder added the eggs that she had just cracked in the hot pan.

Sunflower also notices the male two-leg sitting on the couch in front of the coffee table. He was reading a newspaper. Lee sat right beside him, watching him curiously. But whatever the owners were doing was the least of his worries. Sunflower was more focused on Peter's words. The feeling of being around the outsiders away from home is something he had feared. He didn't want to disobey his father, but he also didn't want to ruin his chance of freedom. He also has a little sister that he needed to watch over, not just himself.

Jeffrey came downstairs, stretching his long body. Carmen was still upstairs with Dandelion, so that allowed the tom to catch a break and focus on himself for once. He did notice how his son had been getting up way earlier than usual. He oversaw him, zoning out and staring at the wall. He slowly approached his son; he felt that parental instinct. It was screaming for trouble occurring with his son.

Sunflower didn't even know his father had snuck on him from behind. He was just focusing about last night. When he felt his tail touch his side, he quickly jumped and nearly fell on the coffee table, startling the male two-leg and Lee. "Woah! woah, calm down." Jeffrey backed away. He was humored from his son's scare. "Don't do that!" Sunflower hissed; his claws clung against the soft floor. "You almost gave me a heart attack!"

"Quit being dramatic." His father chided. "You were staring into a wall. I had to at least check on you to see if you're alive." He moved closer, Sunflower backed away. "I'm fine, pa. I'm just... not in the

mood for right now."

Come on, Sunflower, how is he even going to believe that!?

Jeffrey's eyes appeared to be skeptical. "You know, you can always say something." Said the tom. "I hope you're not thinking about..." He ended off in silence, Sunflower felt a hint of rage with a mix of his grief. "I'm not thinking about **him**." He turned his head away from his father. "I don't want to be reminded." The tom growled. His ignorance concerned Jeffrey further. He knew too much, but he also wanted to forget it. "Sunflower." He approached his son behind him, his muzzle nudging against his long ears. "You have been thinking of him. And I'm not mad about it."

Sunflower didn't seem convinced. He turned his head away again, facing at the brown front door. Jeffrey's eyes furrowed. He moved right in front of his son. There was silence between both of them until he spoke up. "Listen. As much as I want you to be happy, I don't want you to follow the same mistakes as me and your uncle had done." His words were firm. "You know this, don't you?"

"Of how he left us?" Sunflower glared at his father. "You think we're okay about moving on like nothing happened? You used that as an excuse not to touch some grass!"

Jeffrey stopped; he led out an aggravated sigh. *Here goes that argument again.*

"It's not just about your uncle." He responded, his height towering over his son. "There's some things not most are ready to speak about. I-" He was cut off. Carmen is seen coming downstairs, carrying her kit towards the bed near a heater to warm up the house during those chilly mornings. She overheard her mate and son speaking to each other. "You make every excuse for that!" Sunflower stomped his paws on the ground. "You always say about 'exploring the world', when can I go do that? When can I make decisions on my own?"

"When you have common sense to survive in the wild!" Jeffrey blocked Sunflower's view, forcing him to look. "You don't know **what** you'll get yourself into! You are not ready. Your uncle wasn't

either, and look what that got him?"

Sunflower knew he had no say in this. This was like speaking into a brick wall. He ended up walking away, his head looking down on the gray floor. Carmen saw his son passing by and went upstairs. She could tell his pain from his eyes and his slow movement. She and him weren't too different. Jeffrey watched as his son went off. It pained him to tell these things and destroy his young heart for freedom. But he knew it was going to benefit his son in the end, hopefully.

The black tom went upstairs, passing by the yellow striped walls. There were thoughts going through his mind and the memory of seeing his uncle, his second father figure, walking away from him. He could remember the strange smell of blood, the dark cloudy skies outside of the window. The rain hitting his uncle's back as he padded off, abandoning his family.

His attention was set away when he smelt the scent of his owner's son in that messy room around the right side of the corner, away from the master bedroom. He peeked his head through, pushing the door to see the room still unclean. The female two-leg had probably refused to clean his room. He didn't know why, though; he was glad they didn't go through the process.

The room smelt like flowers and a strong scent of cologne that made him sneeze. He could see the drawings all over the desk close to the wide wall between the windows. He could see the bed being made and small plush toys that Sunflower would find himself cuddling with... which was embarrassing.

He really loved his ear huggers and those melodies... Sunflower thought. He stared at those headphones hanging to a small stand on the dresser. And there were records, even one that was, of course, his favorite song. He felt nostalgic for some reason. He didn't know why, but there was an old soul to his childish, anxiety-ridden self. He wanted to escape with his melodies and his drawings. He could feel that the boy may have faced the same conflict with his own parents. But a little differently.

Sunflower jumped across the desk, nearly slipping on some of the

drawn paper. It was a little odd that the boy liked to draw spiders... a lot.

A hint of warm air hit his body when he came close to the open window. He didn't know why, but there were urges. Urges of to just... escape. He's old, old enough to do a lot for himself, he shouldn't have to rely on his family any longer, if his father wasn't going to let him go out, he'll do it himself. There were doubts that something like this could change everything. Maybe he was growing himself up too fast.

Protect that kit side of yours. Said his mother, remembering what she had told him moons back.

You won't know it until it's gone.

The words faded off when he stepped foot onto the ledge, staring down at the bushes. The wind from the mountains blew his face. He heard someone walking behind him. It was Lee.

"Sunflower!?" He yelled.

The black tom quickly jumped backward and fell off the window on accident. "SUNFLOWER!" Lee shrieked and ran to the desk and up onto the ledge. "WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?"

Sunflower didn't answer. The large bush closed in on him. The thorns pricked his paws and bristled his fur. "Ow! ow!" The tom yowled, now running off from the bush. He was stuck with some thorns on his body. Carmen was staring out in the window. She saw her son running off and immediately jumped from the window ledge. "SUNFLOWER!" She screamed, running out of that small door.

The tom ran as fast as the wind could take him. He didn't hear his mother or father's distressed calls. "JEFFREY!" Carmen cried, running out of that door to chase her son down, Jeffrey immediately rose from his bed, still thinking of the argument he just had. *He escaped.* He thought. *I told him not, and yet he ends up running off!?*

"SUNFLOWER!" His father's voice thundered, his heart pumping out of his chest. The worry was setting i. Hiss long legs kept a pace behind him.

The tom ended up disappearing, leaving his parents behind.

Chapter 4

From what felt like eternity just from running into a forest, the guilt was sinking in. The evening sun blazed on his striped, glossy fur; his long legs ached after running for too long. He knew he was far off when he hadn't heard the monsters passing by behind the two-leg nest.

He stopped and collapsed onto the green grass. He wheezed, feeling his body tremble from how terrified he was when he heard his father yell for the first time. "This is the worst." He murmured. "This is the worst; this is the worst!" The tom was regretting what he had done. He hated to face the reality, but this had proved his father's point.

Sunflower held against the ground; his body hurt too much to barely move a single muscle. "This didn't go well... ugh..." He started to crawl, using the remaining strength his body had. "I can't even go back now that my head will be their dinner the next time I'll do." He looked at the ground, his heart pounded hard. He felt as if he was going to go unconscious, his eyes watered from the wind hitting his face too hard.

I shouldn't have listened to him. Why did I even jump out of that window?

This was one of the worst decisions he could ever imagine, coming from how his entire body hurts from the fall. He was lucky to even be alive. The Softpaw, who became a loner, rolled onto his belly. He didn't want to move. He just wanted to close his eyes; he hated accepting the fact that his selfishness had led to him without a family. Although he wondered if Peter could find him here. The bird chirpings faded off when he closed his eyes and went unconscious. He was finally relaxing for a moment. The peace and quiet was somehow better than being in the nest with the two-leg music on. LOUD.

There were even leaves stuck onto his webbed paws. It left a sticky

substance like a web that stuck into the leaves, making it harder to get off. He couldn't really try. He was just that tired.

But for some reason, he couldn't fall to sleep easily. There was a disturbance somewhere that only his body could react. There were noises of tall grass and a cat lurking somewhere near him. His eyes opened and darted around, he raises his head and his entire limping body. His ears moved collectively, trying to find where the culprit of the ominous noises was. It was weird that he was giving in to those senses.

He was starting to see colors, specifically the color of yellow as his eyes. The words screaming in his mind.

WATCH OUT!

A large cat emerged from the bush behind him, Sunflower quickly ducked and rolled onto a log. "INTRUDER!" The muscular cat hissed. Her fur had a dark, ginger color with stripes all over her body. It was pretty obvious that she is a tabby, but a very wild looking one in his eyes.

"I don't mean any harm!" The tom raised his paws, who didn't really convince the she-cat depsite how young he looked, around eleven moons that is. "I don't believe you! Trespasser!" The she-cat moved closer to the tom. "You look like you're one of those savior cats!" She snarled her teeth at him. Her eyes were the reminder of the sunset warrior's fury.

Sunflower curled up into a defensive ball, his eyes dilating from danger and seeing darkness upon the she-cat's eyes. He really didn't fit in the forest, at all. Those voices were weighing his confidence down. He could feel his heart constantly beating, he could pass out by any given moment. His chest moved up and down, breathing like an exhausted engine from an old train down the railroad. He could imagine being in the middle of the ocean during a storm. Each wave was his fear that drowned out all of his happiness.

He spotted an orange tabby coming from the bushes, his paw holding against his chest where is heart is. The ginger looked like he was bad news coming from his scarred appearance.

"What have you found, Cherry'fang?" The green-eyed tom asked. He saw the loner in front of his eyes, noticing the red and black collar on his neck. He was a Softpaw. "We found someone trespassing in the borders of TerraClan." The cat, who is named Cherry'fang stated. "He looked similar with one of those cats who partook in Web'star's murder." She pressed her paw down on Sunflower's tail. Rusty'claw scoffed. "He looks quite scared; I'd look at you crazy if this was one of his killers." He observed him, noticing his small body.

"Get away!" Sunflower's ears flattened, he hissed at the two cats. "I don't know what you're talking about or who Web'star is! You don't know who you're messing with!"

"You stay down. You're inferior to us." Rusty'claw sneered, shoving him down and holding his paw near his neck. "He seems hostile, don't you think?" The ginger tom glance at Cherry'fang, hoping for her to agree. The she-cat appeared to be hesitant. Was this really worth ending the life of someone who's just as young as an apprentice?

Sunflower felt his paw knead him onto the ground, and his eyes were fearful. He didn't realize what those clan cats were capable of. "I don't think we should." Cherry'fang shook her head, her eyes were anxious of this idea. "You know I'll get disowned if we..."

"Your family isn't even there most of the time, so why bother?" The ginger tom replied, his claws unsheathed and pressing on Sunflower's fur. "I get to have a say in this, Cherry'fang. You know if you lose me, you won't have anyone." His eyes gave a cold glare. The she-cat backed away in defeat. He was her friend for many moons. She didn't want to upset him.

When Rusty'claw saw her cower, he turned to the terrified Softpaw, his claws pierced onto his chest, creating a scar. This was ultimately the last straw.

"You get your paws off of me! Mangy fox-heart!"

Out of instinct, Sunflower kicked him right in the muzzle.

"OW! OOW!" Rusty'claw fell onto his back, weeping like a kit. This made Cherry'fang to retaliate and run at the loner. "GET BACK HERE!" She shouted, Sunflower took off running with his slender body, his legs allowing him to run fast than most could. he didn't know where he went, but he was running. running away from those two cats who could've possibly killed them. Maybe Peter was right about how crazy clan cats could be.

Further into territory where he reached to the large stream, he didn't look where he was going and ended up bumping onto a gray speckled cat.

"Woah!" She collapsed onto his body.

"Oh no! I'm sorry I-" Sunflower tried to help her up, his paws touching her arm. It nearly made his heart skip a beat.

"No- no- it's fine! It's fine!" The she-cat blurted; she was already in a stressed mood, but she didn't want to snap at him. Although, she was lying in a very, uncomfortable and awkward position. "No, you're not fine. Let me help you." The tom tugged his arms, the webbed paw was still caught on her fur. Sunflower couldn't get his paw unstuck.

"Oh." The tom muttered. "I **can't** help you."

The she-cat scoffed. "What do you mean you can't help? Can't you just-" She tried removing herself, her attempts were futile. "Good SunClan..." The gray cat sighed. "I'm not even surprised some... weirdo has sticky paws." She grumbled, Sunflower took offense from her words. "Blame my dad's genes. He's got these weird looking paws that looks like duck feet, and he doesn't even like water!"

"That's... odd." The she-cat stared at him.

And there it was, the fateful awkward silence. Sunflower had probably thought he was going to be stuck with her forever, his limbs twisted from every move he made. *Curse these paws...*

The gray cat had nothing to say, she was just as awkward as he is.

The stressed look on her eyes showed that she was going through something, but Sunflower pays no mind... yet. "So... what's your name?" The tom asked, curiously. "Ghost'paw." She spoke. "I'm an apprentice from..." She was hesitant to speak on where she had come from, she ends up lying. "BreezeClan."

"Oh! I heard that clan before!" The tom exclaimed. "I'm uh-... sure, you're strong enough to throw me out like a flea, huh?" He purred, attempting to making a good joke, only to fall flat. Ghost'paw was rather amused from his way of getting through his social anxiety. "I can't do that, but I can do this."

She rocked her body back in forth, the two was sent flying down the hill. Sunflower shrieked, sliding down the dirt. Ghost'paw was rather unfazed with them falling onto the incoming stream.

"Duck your head, so you don't lose it!" She shouted. All of her teasing made everything worse.

"WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU!?" The tom howled, ducking his head from the long tree branches along the way. He was sliding on top of her body in a hugging position. The two then left the ground and fell onto the water, the wetness made his paws manageable to let go of her body, but his fur was drenched in the process. He thought he was going to drown when his body sink slightly. Ghost'paw swam in front of him, noticing his struggle. "Calm down!" She urged. "You got webbed paws for a reason!"

Sunflower paddled his paws. he ended up floating from his useful webbed paws that made it easier for him to swim. "I... I think I am swimming!" He mewed excitedly. His naïveté is what brought the softer side of Ghost'paw. "You're silly. You haven't even told me your name."

"Oh-... uh... Sunflower." The black tom introduced himself. "The two-legs named me after their kit." He spoke the mention of their late two-leg son. "That's adorable." She purred. "Though, you look as if you could be named something like... Spider? Just a recommendation." She said, swimming towards the shore and drying her fur off. "I've always thought of that. But I never think I'd be reminded of one." Said Sunflower, doing the same.

Her tail swayed slowly; her eyes wondered when she noticed a scar on his chest. "We definitely need you to get those scars checked out. It looks like blood is dripping all over..." She voiced, anxiously. Sunflower looked down at his chest, it was a nasty scar Rusty'claw had given him. He was still angry over that, but his green eyes looked too similar of someone in particular.

"I guess I should." He agreed.

"Come on." Ghost'paw gently nuzzled his forehead. "I'll bring you to WaveClan, my uncle's a medicine cat there." She walked off, expecting the lone Softpaw to follow.

Sunflower did feel some hesitancy from what had happened earlier.

Did I wanted to trust her? I mean... she doesn't seem crazy than what dad always said about them.

He shrugged those thoughts off and kept going, wandering off into the midst of the sunset.

Chapter 5

When it reached dusk, the sun disappeared into the drowning place. The darkness of the night took ahold of the sky, and the stars gleamed in various colors, mainly the color of jade green. Sunflower eyes wandered. There were firelights roaming in the forest, and cats sharing tongues as they sat open in the clearing. *Cats weren't always this territorial.*

The forests were split in different areas, the mountains, the marshes and beaches, the grasslands, and the woodlands. Ghost'paw was following the stream towards the beach where the caves reside. This had given an idea that these cats were something more than just clans, but it was strange that she had accepted a Softpaw like him. Someone who relied on his parents and the two-legs, **someone who ultimately made a selfish decision to run off.**

He could hear voices of his father scolding him, the fearful look of his mother's eyes when he had run off from that home. It made him wonder why they isolated him from going outside.

Ghost'paw noticed the silence they had during the walk. She saw the look of his face and asked. "Are you alright?" Her eyes looked concerned; Sunflower quickly glances at her. "Oh no! I'm fine... I'm-... fine." His eyes appeared to be unsure if he was actually alright. "You don't seem fine." She said, observing his face and noticing the sadness in his eyes. "You can always talk to me about anything."

"Anything?" He stared. Sunflower wasn't the type to express his feelings openly. Ghost'paw gave him a nod. "Everyone has stories to tell if they came here for a reason."

"It has something to do with my parents." Sunflower lowers his head, staring at the tall grass. The wind touched his fur when they were getting close to the caves near the beach. When the gray she-cat heard about his parents, she stopped walking. She had assumed the worst when it came to parents, especially with her own.

"Parents?" Her voice became meek. "You don't think..." She mutters. "Think?" Sunflower tilts his head, confused of what Ghost'paw was saying. She shook her head and turned around, letting the wind hit her face. "Never mind, continue on." The she-cat urged. "It's your story, not mine."

The tom looked at her. He purred humorously from her awkward demeanor. Something that he can relate to. "You ever had overbearing parents before?" He asked. Ghost'paw stared into the small puddle in front of her, and the mention of her parent made her hesitant for some reason. "I have." She spoke. "Just one. My father." Her eyes stared at Sunflower, leaving with a morose silence. His expression changed. "One? You only have..." He stopped instantly when he realized something about her that made him rethink his wording. "I'm so... sorry. I didn't mean to -"

"It's fine." She spoke with reluctance and guilt. "My mother wasn't meant to live long anyway." She said, her voice faded off when she felt grief, and it hurt. This made Sunflower wonder about her father or anyone who was close to her. Did she have a support system? Did she have anyone that she could be around? It gave a sour taste in his maw to realize that someone was alone, he could tell she didn't want to admit it.

"Is your father still well?" He asked, his eyes filled with curiosity, as if he even knew her father at all. Ghost'paw shook her head. "No, he's been blocking me off ever since I left WaveClan. He doesn't see me as his daughter anymore." She grunted, just hearing the words of her father's existence really makes a question about her own. And for Sunflower, this all reminded of his father and his uncle.

"You know..." He began. "There's always a light in everything. I'll be the one to lead the way."

The she-cat could feel hope coming from his warm aura. He seems to look at everything in a positive way, and that made her feel... happy? It was a very strange sensation, but she couldn't help but purr.

"Hey!" A tom spotted the two, his green eyes gleaming through the darkness. The two cats stood up to see a large tuxedo tom approach

them, and his eyes looked somewhat suspicious. "Oh! Emerald'glare.." Ghost'paw stood up and stood in front of the Softpaw. "He's with me." She spoke in a formal way, the complete opposite of her quietness from earlier. Sunflower gazed at the tall tom; he raised his head, wanting to touch noses. "Sunflower." He introduced.

"Hmm..." Emerald'glare grunted, inspecting him slowly. The tom was feeble and slender. But he did notice his webbed paws, which sparked his interest. *Only the true **WaveClan** cats had webbed paws.*

"An interesting individual, it seems. And yet, I thought you'd bring another slacker from the two-leg nest." The tom gaze at Sunflower in an amusing way. "Emerald'glare, an eye of a gem. Greetings to you." He touched noses with the newcomer. "I assume you're looking for somewhere to be. Maybe in the waves like us?"

"Well, no, I'm... kind of... staying for the night. Sunflower said. "I need to get back to my elders by sunrise, or they'll tear my head off."

"Oh?" Emerald'glare tilts his head. "I suppose we can house some cats." He replied. "Follow me."

Sunflower's ears perked up when he was given the chance to go with the clan cats. But then he was worried for Ghost'paw, who appeared to be proud of the tom, although it was a sting in the heart that she wouldn't have to see him anymore soon. "You can carry on. Just make sure you get that scar checked out, alright?" Ghost'paw nuzzled her head against his. "Alright!" Said the black tom, who eagerly followed the tom into the caves. He'll hope to see her again soon.

Ghost'paw watched as the two disappeared into the caves. For some reason, she almost felt as if he was a missing piece to her loneliness for a long time. But she needed to move on. She had responsibilities to do.

When she heard a voice of a TerraClan spirit calling for her name, her eyes grew green, hearing the wildcat's voice before scurrying off.

"Come, Ghost'paw. We need you."

Chapter **6**

The caves were filled with crystals sprouting from the ground and stuck into the rocky walls. The bright, shining light reflected off the crystals and nearly blinded his eyes, which made him squint.

"Hope your eyes are used to this." Emerald'glare warned, the sound of a rushing water and the waves above became more present as they reached to the long vines drenching over the entrance. Sunflower opened his eyes to see a humongous cave underground, where there were cats, lots of cats living in their crystal domain. There were dens made of large sticks and bushes; some were in the connected tunnels. There was also a waterfall and a large pond on the left side of the cave, opposite to the small pond.

A crystallized cliff hovered above the camp, where the leader resides in. "This is WaveClan camp... your temporary home." Said the deputy, trotting down the pile of rocks and shells with his steady paws. "Try not to trip, alright?"

"I'm more concerned about being blind." Sunflower closed his eyes again when he passed by the crystals. "How do you **live** like this?" He followed the deputy to the bottom of the cave, where they came across a clan meeting. He did see where the medicine den is located. "You'll be surprised if you have seen the sunstone. It's worse, trust me." Emerald'glare walked to the medicine den, he was still eying at Sunflower's scarred chest. "You still need to get that checked out." He urged. "Get into that den, I'll give my leader a notice, and maybe the medicine cat can help you."

There was a small pond with water coming from the rocky wall inside the large den. Sunflower was very, **very** anxious of this. He could hear the voices coming back to him when he's in an unknown environment. He could feel some stares behind his back, stabbing through his guts and his heart that continuously pounded. His ears were flattened, he didn't feel like he wanted to leave Emerald'glare's

side just yet. "...Are you sure?" He asked.

The deputy scoffed. "You think we're just as crazy as those cats in the forest? Just stay calm, and don't speak to anyone if you don't feel like it." He said, his head gesturing to one of the unoccupied moss beds. He then walked off, his tail swaying from side to side. Sunflower's tail tucked under his hind legs, walking slowly to his bed. He heard the rushing of the water pouring onto the pond, the murmuring of other cats who was outside of the den.

He was now alone. There were still some regrets he made from disobeying his father's orders. His scar on his chest ached from the ginger tom's claws on him. But his heart remained warm for Ghost'paw after hearing about her story. Peter was right about what he had said, he'll either find a friend, or a foe. He was just hoping he wouldn't have to see that ginger tom again.

But. Something tells Sunflower that there was some similarity, he didn't know why. The ginger tom's green eyes were reminded of a hero whose heart made with fire. Someone that his father had described when telling outsider stories. Maybe he had living ancestors? But that could be impossible coming from someone like Rusty'claw. he hadn't known him fully, but he could tell that he wasn't the cat to befriend with.

As he sat there, alone with his thoughts that calmed his anxiety down, he noticed a cold breeze behind him. There was no opening to the higher ground, but he felt there were some eyes behind his shoulder. Sunflower looked at the corner of his eye, in the midst of the darkness in the corner of the medicine cave is a black cat. A black cat with icy blue eyes, and a torn neck with dried blood all over his fur.

The tom's eyes widened when he saw the figure in the corner. His fur shot up when staring at the figure. It looked almost the same to his uncle that he hasn't seen in a long time, and from what he remembered is that he had white paws. But this figure only had one left paw, and his collar was purple, with dog teeth for spikes.

Sunflower's body became paralyzed, he didn't know why the figure was watching him. He couldn't move, he could barely breathe. His

whole body was confined in his spot, his ears were ringing like the loud church bells in the two-leg towns. His claws traced the dirt, digging thoroughly, he thought the worst of that vision, and how similar the cat looked in one of his father's stories. A violent figure filled with bloodlust, the one who slayed the tiger.

Who are you? Will you hurt me?

Those thoughts remained in his mind; he could feel himself passing out from the blood that erupted from his neck. What did this ghost want from him? The spirit stood on his four paws, he had a lanky figure like Sunflower, blue eyes like his uncle. Despite how sinister and untrustworthy he looked; he was ominously calm. He padded beside Sunflower, his tail lashing slowly when he sat there. *It was weird.*

He glared at him, his eyes so wide it could bulge from his sockets. His eyes tearing up from the sight of the figure standing on ground, near him. It only took seconds to find himself back to reality when someone was yelling onto his ears.

"SUNFLOWER!"

He jumped up, the spirit sitting behind him had disappeared. He stared at Emerald'glare with two cats in front of him. The cats known as Oleander'cloud, and his apprentice Ruby'paw who was carrying a pile of herbs around her neck with a built leaf pouch. The black tom wheezed heavily; his vision was dizzy. He didn't think that whatever he had saw was real, but only a simple hallucination.

The Siamese cat noticed how tense Sunflower looked, it immediately worried him. He also looked somewhat similar to the cat who took place in Web'star's murder, but their eyes were different, and he had visible stripes under the crystal light which was odd for cats with solid colors. Oleander'cloud turned around at Emerald'glare, there was something skeptical about Sunflower. But he wouldn't want to spread the word that'll cause further panic. "Let us take care of him while you go on with your duties, Emerald'glare."

The deputy affirmatively nodded; he had a look of trust; he was hoping for that this could go well. He goes off on his own to speak with the leader. Sunflower was paranoid, he stared at Oleander'cloud as if he had saw nine heads. Ruby'paw was quiet, she didn't really say anything. But she knew that the Softpaw was odd.

"Don't get all paranoid now." The medicine cat crooned, approaching slowly to Sunflower who had no words left. "We're only there to help you, no need for claws."

Sunflower watched as the two began to rummage their pile, he didn't know what they were going to give him. But all he heard from his father is medicine cats feeding the innocent warriors death berries. That put him further into paranoia. Oleander'cloud was being very gentle and quiet. His soft murmur was reminded of the elderly two-legs. He seemed to be around forty moons, but still had an old soul.

The medicine cat dragged a long-rooted, dry poppy flower. He shook its head, causing the seeds to fall below him. Sunflower carefully observed, the quiet environment of the cave late at night was calming. He could barely hear whatever was going on in the meeting the cats had, but he wished he didn't want to hear it. Oleander'cloud moved one of the seeds in front of the black tom, his eyes filled with concern to see the small tom terrified of where he is. "Eat these." He ordered. "It will soothe your distress."

Sunflower nudged the seed with his tiny nose and licked it from the ground. He swallowed it and sat there to watch the two cats manage the cave. It was quiet now; his worries were finally at ease. He lowered his head onto the soft moss bed, all of his thoughts drowned out from the effective poppy seeds. The cave was cold but not in a way that encouraged fear. But to calm him. He could feel a tail poking his spine, the spirit appearing behind him again, but only he could see and feel it. His body didn't feel fearful of the figure anymore.

When he finally rested, the ghost got on a loaf position. Its head rested on top of Sunflower, and its purring vibrated his entire body.

Today didn't go well, but it was only just a bad day, and not a bad life.

Tomorrow, there will be another day. It will be better than the last.

Chapter 7

The next sunrise.

Sunflower woke up, he heard growling coming from the ghost. He saw the spirit glaring at a medium sized cat standing outside of the medicine den. There was no sign of Oleander'cloud and Ruby'paw. "Hello? New cat?" The mysterious tom spoke, his voice echoed the empty cave since all the other warriors had gone outside but the queens and kits. Sunflower's ears perked up, his yellow eyes gaze at the tom with marbled blotches on his coat. The cat felt unusual to be seen as a something in the wild. "Who..." Sunflower squinted his eyes, now seeing him clearly. "Who are you?"

The warrior revealed himself, approaching the cave slowly. "Onyx'foot." The Bengal tom tilt his head to inspect the Softpaw with wonder. "I assume you came here last night new cat. Although you didn't really get a good welcome, as what Ghost'paw said." The Bengal tom entered the medicine cave, observing him. Sunflower's eyes widened; he got up from his moss bed, still feeling dizzy from his sleep. "You... you know Ghost'paw?" He replied. Onyx'foot scoffs. "Well, everyone has to know everyone. Ghost'paw's pretty prominent around here."

His casual demeanor intrigued the black tom, he slowly approached him, noticing that the two were nearly the same height. Sunflower was only shorter. He had expected for him to realize that he's a Softpaw, and not someone who is born wild. Onyx'foot notice how meek he is, it led him to say this: "If you think I'm judging you for being with two-legs. You're wrong. I used to be a Softpaw at some point."

There was silence, the black tom never knew that.

He also didn't want to be seen as childish and naive to be named as the 'new cat'.

"It's obvious." Sunflower tried speaking in a sarcastic manner. His

attempts to be seen as the cooler one had humored the Bengal cat. "Of course it is. It's just the fact that me and Monty decided to abandon the riches and get off free y'know?" Onyx'foot's tail swayed comfortably, he backed right out into the middle of the main cave. The black cat was puzzled on who 'Monty' is. He ends up trotting right out of the cave, following him. There was no sign of the spirit, as it had disappeared when Sunflower exited the den.

"I think you need some fresh air new cat." Onyx'foot teased, this caused the black tom to frown. "It's Sunflower for your information." He growled, but that entertained Onyx'foot even more. "I'm just messing around. You can come with me if you like, just so you won't get bored?" Said Onyx'foot, he was more than welcome to help the Softpaw out. Sunflower looked around; he was realizing how empty the cave had become. He was interested now. "Where had everyone gone? I mean-... it was so packed last night."

"We usually get a gathering after four quarter-moons every sun high." He padded in front of him, passing by the queens who were watching the two. The sun shined between the long vines as the Bengal tom exited the main cave and to the outside. The long grass shined green and gold, the wind from the drowning place instantly hit Onyx'foot's back. Sunflower's eyes squint when he briefly saw the sun before turning his attention to the warrior.

The trees rustled in front of Onyx'foot, despite his up-beat personality, his expression seemed bothered about the gathering. "Lily'flight asked for the gathering to be way earlier than usual." He explained, turning his head around at Sunflower who was unaware of the event. "She wanted to speak about our last leader of WaveClan who died to rogues."

Rogues...?

Sunflower immediately connected as soon there were mentions of 'rogues'. The memory of running away as the scavenger went after the gray tabby. And the mention of WaveClan despite giving out a name that split himself from that identity.

Peter, outsiders... **Web'star.**

"I know him!" The tom exclaimed. "He saved me from the outsiders!"

Onyx'foot's maw was left agape, his words stumbling each other. "You...- you saw him? You saw him before he-?"

Sunflower shouted. "Yes! Yes! **He** never told me that he was a leader of some weird cat faction!"

This had made everything into one big mess, Sunflower could be beneficial for evidence, but Onyx'foot wasn't sure, just not yet. He was conflicted about spreading the word or keep it in until further use. He will need to keep it until the right time during the gathering. Sunflower was just as shocked at Onyx'foot, he never knew how obvious this was. It made him feel like a complete mouse-brain. That also made him wonder about a cat in particular that he just met yesterday. When he had no words left to share, Onyx'foot led out a sigh. "If this is true, you'll be interrogated. It'll be better to say the truth than to leave Lily'flight in a dead end." He stated. "Can you do that?"

Sunflower nodded firmly. "I could try, hopefully. I won't be here long though."

Onyx'foot was relieved that he was able to comply. "You are better than most Softpaws I've come across to." He joked. "Now, come on! The gathering is in a few." He ran off. Sunflower trailed behind, the breeze leaving his shoulders as he ran faster than before. Passing by the borders of the hot grasslands where BlazeClan had lived. And where he saw the Snowclaw of BreezeClan's territory, puncturing the clouds with its pointy mountain top.

He could feel himself getting used to the wilderness and finding that he wasn't the only one who set foot in the lands as a Softpaw. There could probably be more cats that lived that life in the gathering. He couldn't wait for more.

When he followed the stream to a large lake in the middle of the land, he saw that there were cats gathering in the island. The sun was shining directly at the leaders who sat on the smooth rocks. He stood on the small ledge, his eyes shining bright with excitement.

"This way!" Onyx'foot urged, speeding down the hill. Sunflower following as the wind took him wherever he goes.

Chapter **8**

In the midst of the crowd, the ginger tom sat on the rock, his chest held up high. He hoped that his fiery ancestors would see him in a new light.

Rusty'claw was excited. It was strange coming from how the gathering was hosted early to honor Web'star's death. But he didn't care. He was just there for the new prophecy. Now that the leader's prophecy had failed, it was only up to SunClan to define his destiny, and maybe he'll become just like his great ancestor. Firestar.

He sat with his brother, Yellow'petal. Cherry'fang was nowhere to be found. It was odd for his brother since he was used to seeing her. "Where is she?" He whispered on his brother's ear. The crowd was murmuring like crazy, so the two could barely hear each other from the packed island in the middle of the lake. Rusty'claw heard his brother's words and rolled his eyes. "She's probably with her kin. I'm surprised they even care that much for her."

"I mean, they're family. Like us." Yellow'petal's eyes glance at the BlazeClan leader and his two sisters sitting on the rocks together. For some reason, seeing the small little family almost made him feel jealous. "Yeah, right. A good, healthy family." He glared. "Something that mother finds it hard to be." He murmured. His lack of worry for his own mother gave a sour taste to Yellow'petal. He seems that he hasn't taken everything well after what happened. "You should at least reconcile with mother instead of worrying about our history. Pride will be your downfall before you even know it."

"Webs had spun in your brains if you think I'm choosing other things instead of family. I live and fight with honor. Our flames won't die out any longer. Be glad that I even care to sit with you today." The ginger tom snarled, leaving Yellow'petal hopeless to ever change his brother's mind. he turned around to stare at the leaders watching over the clans, the sun beaming down the island, sensing the brothers observing the gathering.

Meanwhile, Sunflower was trying hard to follow Onyx'foot who was trying to find Monty. He kept constantly bumping onto other cats, receiving aggravated responses and hissing that caused his social anxiety to grow.

Hey! Watch it!

Out of the way, stripes!

Excuse you!

He heard it all, his lean form shriveled up in size. He was still too sensitive to be out in the wild. And that is what made him fear for something to happen. To cool his mind, he asks this: "Hey, Onyx'foot...? Who's Monty?" He whispered to the Bengal tom. Onyx'foot stopped and turned around at Sunflower before spotting the brown tom. "He's that one loner who lives in TerraClan's forest. He's not really a rule follower, nor does he really deem himself as a warrior or a hero. It's strange that he thinks it's... narcissistic."

Narciss- what!?

Sunflower just stood there, confused on that word the warrior had said. He didn't want to ask, though. That was personal. "Now, catch on! We can't wait!" Onyx'foot yelled. Sunflower mumbled, feeling annoyed of how fast the warrior was. He could barely catch on. Out of nowhere, he accidentally bumped into a kit and stepped on his paw. The kit mewled and hissed at the Softpaw. "Watch it!" The feisty kit clawed the dirt. His eyes glared at the tom.

"Oh no! I'm sorry, little one!" The black tom apologized; he nudged his nose against the kit's paw. "You better be! Dirt-face!" The tom-kit tried scratching his nose with his tiny claws. His mother quickly shoved him away, scolding him. "Language!" The torbie she-cat snarled at him. The kit's immediate response was to run alongside his sister, who was interacting, amused the black tom.

The torbie led out an exhausted breath. She turned around at Sunflower. "I apologize for that. He's a pain." She bowed her head at him, the black tom didn't mind, though. The kits were very cute to see. "He's fine. Your kits are adorable... by the way." He said, staring

down at the kits who were hiding under their mother. "Thank you, their names are Ember'kit and Amber'kit." Said the mother torbie, her snout nudging the two of them.

"Heh... **what?**" Sunflower tilt his head to the other side, his expression confused of the names. *What did she say?*

"Ember'kit and Amber'kit?" The mother torbie mewed, as if she was proud of their names. It was odd. But he didn't want to be rude. The gathering was about to begin, so he had to think quickly. "Very... nice names. Uhm-... uh..."

"Tawny'storm." The mother torbie introduced herself. "You seem new to the wilderness, welcome aboard." She chirped, her heart filled with warmth for new cats such as him. Even though she was a somewhat of an odd individual, Sunflower appreciated her and her kits. "Thank you." He bowed his head back and then padded off.

"Monty!" Onyx'foot shouted, running towards the lanky tom. Monty was focusing on himself as he sat near the edge of the island. He heard Onyx'foot's yowl and raised his head to see the Bengal tom tackle him down. "Woah! Woah!" Monty had his paws on Onyx'foot's side and held him from falling onto the water. "Calm yourself! You're going to make us fall!"

"Sorry! Sorry!" Onyx'foot rolled from his belly area, Sunflower sat down. His eyes glance at Monty. He still wasn't used to being around with the outsiders, but he seems to be interesting. "Yeah, yeah, don't apologize. It's been a while since I've been around here." Monty rubbed his long ears using his paws, his tongue grazing on his arm. "Sorry, I was busy due to the warrior ceremony I just had. You know they'll give us some tasks or whatever."

"And who is he?" Monty glared at Sunflower, who hid his head behind a rock when mentioned of his strange presence. "Him?" Onyx'foot walked towards the rock, and he sat beside the shy tom. "This is Sunflower. The new cat." He moved his muzzle towards the tom, introducing him. Sunflower was building up the courage to greet Monty. But his voice only came out in a strange mew with voice cracks that went high-pitched just for a split second. "Hi?"

"Hi?" Monty mocked at the tom; he purred. "He's quite silly looking, never seen a black cat with stripes before. Or even with duck-looking paws." He stretched his long, tall body and approached the tom, casting a shadow on both of them. Sunflower was pretty intimidated from his height. He was hiding behind Onyx'foot, whispering. "What has those two legs even feed him?" He muttered, which caused the Bengal tom to laugh. Monty, on the other hand, tilt his head to the side. "I heard that, Softpaw."

"Don't mind him." Onyx'foot said. "We really need to get into a spot and quiet down."

"On it." Monty walked off. His shadow disappeared from the ground they stood on. Onyx'foot followed with Monty, Sunflower didn't have any thoughts yet, he knew this was going to be a long day of meeting and greeting new cats. At least he had met a friend other than a foe.

When the loudness died down, the four leaders stood up on the rocks that was shined below the sun. The trees surrounding the area, creating shade over the crowd of cats. Otter'star, who sat at the very right, his eyes appeared to be stressed from the events that took place. He lost a lot in his life. His mate, his daughter, his two friends, and even his own well-being that was now thrown into the dust. If it wasn't for Crow'stalk's death, he would've had the life he wanted.

Only the wind is heard throughout the big silence. TerraClan's leader, Cedar'star approached the high rocks carefully. Sunflower had saw that she is disabled on the right side of her back leg. That increased his curiosity for her, and others. He stayed quiet, waiting for the gathering to begin. "Now." The she-cat's eyes glance down at the cats, she did notice a specific one, but she wasn't too sure. She turned her head into one of the leaders. "Will any of you would like to start the meeting?" She asked.

Sun'star had his chest puffed up. "I believe I would like to start first." He spoke in a formal, confident tone. He could see his sisters and brother sitting together. Cedar'star bowed her head. Only the kin of the sunrise had the honor to go first. Sun'star padded up to the tip of the cliff and led out a breath before beginning his

segment. "I would like to say that my dearest sister, Fire'light had returned from her short journey, and that she had found a new landmark in the border of all territories for us to train our apprentices in. It'll be beneficial for our apprentice's safety during these harsh times."

Cherry'fang, who sat by her sister rolled her eyes. A hint of jealousy is seen in her eyes. Wood'bark, their half-brother noticed his sister's eyes. He had a feeling that she was dealing with something, he glared at Rusty'claw in the corner of his eye. *Mangy freak...*

After Sun'star's short speech, Gale'star was next.

"A warrior... that I will not mention of our clan had abandoned us." He said, staying in the shadows in the far left. His aloof, jaded voice made Sunflower's body shiver. Although, the gathering was quiet boring. He could barely keep himself conscious just to listen to stupid ramblings of leaders going back and forth.

His eyes looked around at the cats who were sharing tongues. His ears perked when he noticed a ginger tom, the one who he saw the other day. He could feel his chest tighten when he saw those scars, and the eyes of someone who could've ended his life right there. It didn't help when he saw Cherry'fang too. Sunflower's stares were caught by Yellow'petal. The light ginger was questioned by the black tom's looks, he turned his head at Rusty'claw and nudged his shoulder. "You know him?"

"Know who?" Rusty'claw's voice was rough, and snappy. He snapped his head at the black tom, recgonizing him from his yellow eyes and his slender build. *Him.*

His stomach turned, there was anxiety coming from Sunflower's stares that seemed like he was going to tell someone about them. He could sense something more about him than just being a mere Softpaw. His only focus for right now is the new prophecy. Yellow'petal notice how his brother ignored the question, he assumed that it was nothing and went on to watch the meeting. "The clan is running fine." Cedar'star explained. "But we have started doing curfew after Web'star's death. May the sun guide him to light." She bowed her head, leaving a melancholic air all over the

gathering island.

Cedar'star gazes at Otter'star in the mention of the old leader's death. The WaveClan leader didn't want to speak about it, but with Lily'flight's eyes on him, he had no choice. He's been ignoring it all for too long. "I appreciate your awareness, Cedar'star." His voice is low and somber. "I have admittedly ignored for far too long. The answers are yet to be given, I have no words."

For what reason, Otter'star's obvious ignorance towards his old friend's death left a bitter taste in everyone's maws. And now that the rogues are growing more powerful as each day pass by, his sister, Needle'whisker, couldn't keep her maw shut. "So, you're just not going to address it?" Her loud voice is heard below the rocks, everyone's attention was turned to her. WaveClan had knew how loud mouthy the leader's sister could get. "I didn't say I wouldn't want to address it-..." Otter'star's attempts to defend himself had run low when his sister cuts him off.

"But that's your **friend.** More so, like kin." Needle'whisker stood forward, her eyes boring onto Otter'star's drained eyes. "Back down, Needle'whisker." A tom named Ripple'slash went in front of her. "What the leader says, goes. If he doesn't feel to talk about it, then he shouldn't be forced to." His broad body blocked her view, in hopes of dying down the short argument. "She's right." Fire'light added, her eyes showing disapproval to Otter'star. "If he chooses to ignore, will we be safe any longer when the rogues take over the lands?"

"You're pushing it!" Otter'star's face had a grimace look. He turned his head when the others protested against him, it made the other leaders wonder if he really deserved being one. "Unless we wait for another prophecy..." Sun'star began, he looked anxious just from those dreadful thoughts. "It is our duty to address these things and make plans to keep our camps safe. It's in our code to never make sure that no clan falls behind."

"The code... the code... the code is all every leader care for? I choose not to address these things because I am close to him. These things are something no one should ever go through, and that I would like to keep my peace before anything." He said, now turning

his face away to avoid the eyes of others who were filled with judgement.

"You're useless than a dead mouse!" A cat yelled at him, the crowd murmuring when things were starting to get out of hand. The leaders couldn't help but to give a disapproving look at Otter'star. Gale'star was angrier from how Otter'star had dealt with the death of an old friend. "Pathetic." He murmured. "My mate is your sister, what will happen if the rogues get to her next?"

Otter'star turned around and walked from the rocks, ignoring the words of anger. The cats begging for an answer but receive nothing in return.

Sunflower watched in his very own eyes, the wilderness was unfriendly, but this is a whole new level. He couldn't just sit back and let everything happen. He knew all of the answers from his death, he knew that his ghost had chosen him for a reason. He could see Peter's ghost from a mile away, staring down at the chaos. Onyx'foot was just as annoyed, but he distracted himself by speaking with Monty. So now the Softpaw was on his own.

Rusty'claw saw the argument happen in his own eyes, but still, he didn't care too much. He had the answer, and he was going to give it. He stood on his four paws and travel between the crowd, seeing that the deputy, Emerald'glare was trying to get ahold of the crowd getting ready to charge at Otter'star. He had to make it quick; his ancestor is counting on him.

And then there's the black tom, who is one step ahead of him. Sunflower's silent paws gave him the advantage to stalk across the clearing, and to the front, where cats were murmuring about the argument, and Otter'star's choices. He saw that Rusty'claw was on the same level. It was turning to be some sort of rivalry of who can tell the story first. The ginger tom's heart began to pound when he saw the black tom. His strides were fast, he was constantly bumping onto others, causing problems for those who were in the way.

Who does he think he is? The tom thought. It was his moment to shine, not anyone else.

Emerald'glare was struggling to keep the cats under control, the leaders had to intervene so nothing could start anything and anger the sun. It was already starting to get cloudy. The voices of complaints and upset faces were getting more frequent. Some even asked the removal of Otter'star's role entirely. The deputy then felt a tug behind his tail. Sunflower was pawing him. "Come here." He whispered. Emerald'glare didn't know if he needed leave his position. "Are you sure? You know I can't just-..."

"It's important!" Sunflower mewed, jumping up and down. "Just come here."

Another deputy, Burning'tail saw the tuxedo tom's hesitation. "I'll take care of this from here." She said, standing in front of him to keep the cats under control before chaos. Emerald'glare sighed and went behind the rock. Rusty'claw on the other hand was jumping from rock to rock until he saw Cedar'star. "Wait! Wait!" He shouted. Cedar'star turned her head at the ginger tom, she was already stressed from the madness. "I have an answer! I know what happened in Web'star's death!" Rusty'claw stood in front of her, he was running out of breath trying to manage his way through the crowded island.

"I believe he has an answer!" A voice came from the high rocks. Rusty'claw had a look of hope that it more so about **him.** Everyone had stopped, the crowd was now silent. Onyx'foot and Monty turned to look at the high rock, noticing that the black tom was gone. Emerald'glare was standing onto the highest point. His head held up high as the sun shined onto his glossy black fur. "This one has an answer!" His voice boomed across the gathering island, moving out of the way for Sunflower to be seen.

Rusty'claw's heart dropped, his eyes staring at the tom like a doe in front of a monster's headlights. The cats that were begging for an answer was now in relief, the leaders had no words. Sunflower could feel eyes on him. The sun burning his back as he stood there. He didn't know what made him do it, but knowing that others needed an answer, and knowing that Lily'flight needed a closure, he had to do the right thing. For everyone.

He was now silent; he had a lot of explaining to do.

Chapter **9**

After the gathering ended, things seemed to be all okay.

No.

Rusty'claw didn't think someone could spill the bees that easily. There were even dreams given to him that he was supposed to tell the story, which could trigger the prophecy rain that happens every once a while. He tried to show no disappointment. He stuck through the gathering and the festivals with the last bit of his sanity. The tom sat down on the dry dirt, standing to look at the mountains. The wind breeze through his mattered fur.

The dirt stained him and burning his scars that he had gotten recently. The eyes of disappointment weighed him down, the voices of doubt that caused him to feel as if he was a failure.

He noticed the sun facing him. The ball of fire, his eyes, causing him to look away. He grumbled in frustration, the feeling of disappointment growing stronger than before. He heard a voice behind him. It was Yellow'petal. "Why haven't you come back to camp?" He asked. "You know mother's wondering about you." Yellow'petal's movement seemed nonchalant. Rusty'claw's face grimaced even more. "That's a bunch of horse-dirt. She can barely remember that she even has a second son in the first place."

"That doesn't matter. You hold too much hate in your heart." Yellow'petal sat alongside him, staring at the setting sun. "You need to reconcile with her." He ordered, that annoyed Rusty'claw even more. "She doesn't need reconciliation. She doesn't deserve it." He spat, his tail lashing from side to side. "I'm surprised you're taking up for her as the favorite son."

Yellow'petal could see how hurt his brother looked. It was almost a feeling of betrayal. "You know that hate of yours will get you nowhere, no matter how much someone has done to you. You're putting more wood in the fire." His head nudged his shoulder,

Rusty'claw bared his teeth and shoved him away. Yellow'petal's eyes were hard enough to see the soul of a tom, suffering from inside and out. "If you're still mad about him, we can talk about it." He added.

There were tears coming from Rusty'claw's eyes. He didn't know why he wanted to cry, and even tried ignoring his emotions showing. "I'm not crying for someone who isn't even in our lives anymore. He abandoned our mother. That's where it ends." He closed his eyes, hard enough for his emotions to be avoided.

"You know he wanted you to be great... but not in a way that'll block everything good in your life." Yellow'petal said. He wasn't known to give up on what he wanted. And all he wanted was his brother to get better. "I have good things in life." Rusty'claw sneered, his eyes giving disgusted glares at his brother. "I have a plan that'll get me to the top. You don't know me."

"I do know you." His brother led out a rough grunt. "I know that you don't like that Softpaw, I can see envy all over you." His front legs leaned forward. Rusty'claw's face changed into amusement. "What if I did? What are you going to do about it?" He had an endearing look in his eyes, testing his brother's patience. Yellow'petal's face grew into more irritation. "I know you'll go over the top if it means to ruin some cat's life. I'm not letting you risk that over something so useless!" He snarled at his brother. "You'll get someone killed! You'll get yourself killed!"

The ginger tom scoffed, the wind blowing behind his fur that resembles the blaze of a fire. "A little tom wouldn't lay a claw on me. I dealt with him yesterday. He only ran away from me when he knew I wanted to hurt him."

"He only knew that because he was weak, and vulnerable. Just as how **father** left us in that state!" Yellow'petal hissed, his body tensing up from the memories that he hated to look back in the shadows of their past. Seeing his brother descend from grace of a better life that he should've been thankful for, it angered him even more. "And now you're leaving your family for what? A hopeless dream of chasing a ghost?"

The mention of his father's disappearance made him growl, the tears in his eyes returned in small to big drops. His claws pierced the earth below him. His body vibrated with aggravated growls, he closed his eyes and led out a big sigh. "He wanted me to be great, and I'm doing what he wished. We'll be powerful, we'll be happy, we'll be family again."

Realizing that his brother's mind won't be changed soon, Yellow'petal lowered his head, emitting a defeated sigh. "If this is what you want, then have it. You won't be speaking to us any longer." He murmured, turning his body around. The tension-filled silence was nothing more than frustration, and conflict of one's mind. Yellow'petal headed off, his paws marking the dry, red dirt as he went. Rusty'claw scoffed, his mind speaking negatively of his brother's choices. This is abandonment. And yet he's the one who gets told about how he acts like his father?

But there were thoughts coming to mind. The feeling of losing someone he cared for at such a young age, only to leave when things go awry. He couldn't forgive Golden'flame when she was the one who drove him away, and that caused him to be paranoid. What if his own actions would drive his own blood away? What if he did turn out to look *like him.* Abandoning his problems to chase an ancestor who probably doesn't care about him? No, that couldn't be right. Firestar appeared in his dreams before... *what if... what if... what if?*

Foolish.

Nothing will get in the way. Not even his own family. His mother could mew and cry, his brother can cut him off whatever he wants. But nothing will get in the way of his life dedicated to being what his father couldn't. Nothing.

When he felt the sun darken as the clouds build above him. He stood from his spot and jogged back to camp as the rain drench his fur.

Chapter **10**

"Too soon?"

Onyx'foot sat with Sunflower near the entrance. The wind coming from the seas rumbled, the rain hitting the pebbled ground softly. The sand turning dense as Sunflower stepped forward. "Yeah." He said, his tone showing sadness. "I have to go. My family is waiting for me. I'll have a lot of explaining to do."

The rain continued to fall; the awkward silence left Onyx'foot feeling lost. He's sure that Ghost'paw would also feel the very same. The flower necklaces that he got from the festival, bristled his fur. An idea sparked his mind and lowered his head to tug the necklace off of him. Sunflower noticed this and began to purr. "What are you doing?" He asked. Onyx'foot dragged his unsheathed claws to get the necklaces off. He set it on the ground and looked at the black tom. "This is for you."

Sunflower looked at him. He was surprised. "Really? For me?"

Onyx'foot nodded, moving the necklace using his snout, towards the black tom. "You'll remember this." He added. "Please."

This will possibly be the last time that he'll be outside, in the grass, and in the wild, it almost made him tear up. He didn't want to reveal that he was actually emotional about it, he turns his head and reluctantly dragged the necklace towards him. "Thank you." He said, pleased of the flowers that were given. It was the color of vibrant pink, the vines wrapped around them evenly to make a proper necklace. The vines were thick enough to keep the flowers from physical contact. His red collar was still present, though it looked like it was going to tear off.

Onyx'foot stood up and nuzzled his head against Sunflower's. "Just be careful out there, alright? These flowers are Oleander, the poison will protect you."

Sunflower carefully shifted his head under the other side of the necklace that is bare from the flowers. It was safely put on his neck; he gave a look at Onyx'foot one last time. It was bittersweet that he had to go. But there was no choice. He had the soft life waiting for him. He was bound to be a Softpaw after all.

"Goodbye." Onyx'foot whispered, watching the tom leave as the hanging vines dragged all over his backside.

"Goodbye." Sunflower muttered, the cold front hitting his face. He sprung from the cave and ran off with his slender legs.

Even if he felt unworthy to the wild, he had taken on some traits that were rare back home. His lanky legs were capable of running across the clearing of BlazeClan territory, taking away the attention of other warriors who had saw him. And the fish? It wasn't as bad as what his father had described. He could imagine wondrous things if he did choose to live in the territories. And what name he would have? Black'feather? Flame'gaze? Quick'foot?.. *maybe the last one was quite silly.*

Even with those names, it didn't really fit him. He was told that he looked like a cat who was a deputy before Otter'star took place. **Crow'stalk**. The name sounded almost menacing when he thought about it. He stopped running and began to trot under the bushy, thick trees that protected him from the drizzling rain. The name was nearly mesmerizing when he mouthed it in a whisper, but there was something missing. A potential that he wanted to take.

Every warrior had to be unique, it wasn't just a name for their skills, but it was also an identity, a character. He wouldn't want to be a cat whose whole life is to be someone who they can't reach.

For what it felt like hours, he could feel the dread that caused his fur to stand up. A large two-leg nest set above the ledge. The silhouette of the house that had been rained on. He didn't want to go back; he could hear the voice of his father berating him. But he

was more so afraid of his mother more when he sees her disappointed look. He avoided the tears and kept going.

Carmen stood in the window. She hasn't even slept comfortably ever since her son had run away. It was a sole reminder of Jeffrey's brother who abandoned her son at a young age. However, she noticed how blinded she feel of her son's feelings. She even took notice of her mate's behavior. She wanted her family to be happy, but she also didn't want to hurt Jeffrey and break his trust from going back to the forest.

Her eyes were wide, her breathing was heavy. It felt as if she was going to pass out from the deprivation of sleep. The last thing she wanted to hear is that he was dead. The paranoia had created a large barrier that restricted everything. She wasn't going to speak to anyone or listen to her owners until her son comes back safe. A shadow appeared outside of the porch. The she-cat recognized the yellow eyes of the cat that approached the porch with his head down. She jumped out of the couch, yowling. Jeffrey, who slept on the floor raises his head to hear his mate's cry.

"SUNNY!"

Sunflower lifted his head to see his mother jumping at him and wrapped her paws as she nuzzled her head. "Mama-?" The tom mewed, feeling as if he was a kit again when he felt his mother's touch, fur, and her scent. He purred. "I'm home."

"I know you're home! I know my son is home!" She wept, not even letting him go. She raises her head to inspect his fur. "You don't have any scars, infections?" She asked, sniffing all over his body, and lapping her small tongue to clean his fur. It was almost pleasing that her motherly instincts had always been adored by Sunflower. He could see that Dandelion had been born to a good mother. "Mama I'm fine- just don't get close. I've got some flowers on me, and they'll sting." He huffed, trying to gently get his mother away from the flowers. Carmen understood, and nuzzled her son's head one last time, and got off of him.

But she smelt a scent on him. A scent of fish and flowers coming from somewhere specific, it made her question. "I... can see that you

have oleander wrapped around your neck." She hesitantly said. "But are you alright? Did you run into something?" She urged, hoping for the right question. Sunflower notices his father's glare, but he didn't want to just hide things from him anymore. It almost made every adventure feel like a dream when all he does is stay in the house all day. It feels like being in a cage, isolated from the world.

"Actually..." He began. "I went to spend the night with a group of cats." He spoke up in a proud manner. Jeffrey's maw dropped. "You what!?" His voice roared. The thunder cracked above the house. Carmen was speechless, but it was clear that she had already knew coming from the scent. His father ran through the small door, his eyes filled with anger and worry. The raindrops started to harden; the winds intensified. "You weren't home for a day, and you spent your time with the outsiders when I specifically told you **NOT** to go out!" Jeffrey went in front of Carmen; his voice was loud enough to get into Sunflower's head.

"I wasn't hurt, I came back in one piece, I even made some new friends!" Sunflower hissed at his father. "Nothing had happened to me; I even came back home just to prove that!" He stepped forward, the tears escaping his eyes when his father was starting to yell at him as expected. "Then what's that on your chest!?" Jeffrey shoved Carmen away and began to move closer to his son. His height towered over him. "What did you do that made you get that scar?"

Sunflower looked at his scar that the ginger cat had given him, he backed away as his ears flattened. His heart pounded again as the ringing noise was starting to come back. Hearing his father yell was something he could never get used to. Even for the smallest thing, it'll almost ruin him entirely. "Look, I only got that scar from... some cat. It's never serious. Pa."

"Some cat." Jeffrey snarled; he stepped even closer. His chest was ready to burst in flames for what his son had done. He could see him being the reminder of his brother. "We were worried for you, your poor mother hasn't even slept for the last few hours, and Lee have been taking care of your sister because YOUR selfish decisions that led to you coming back with fleas all over! Look at your fur! It even has mud on them!"

Sunflower could feel his body quiver under his father's shadow, the voices of discouragement that led to his soul curl up into a ball. He wanted to cry out of his own disappointment, and failure. But he realized that all of his problems came from Jeffrey's paranoia. All of this, and his uncle's disappearance, led to a destructive argument between father and son. The small black tom ends up lashing out, which scared his mother and his sister inside the house with Lee.

"**If it wasn't for you that pushed him away, we would've been happier!**" Sunflower shouted at his face, his claws scraping the wood. "I shouldn't have to run from my own father because he's afraid of his son having a purpose!"

Jeffrey and Carmen were silent. It was mainly his father who was appalled to his son talking back to him, which was never heard before. His eyes furrowed, taking offense of his son's words. "This is the life I've given you, and you treat it as something to dump on when I gave you that privilege! You're never getting out of that house again! Not on my watch!" The situation further escalated when his father jumped at him bit down on his son's neck in attempt to force him inside the house, tearing down the necklace he had on. Sunflower hissed as his claws were unsheathed and gave his father scratches. "Let me go!" He cried. Carmen immediately hissed and batted Jeffrey harshly, forcing him to let go of her son. "Get off of him!" She demanded. "**Now!**"

Jeffrey hissed and released his maw and jumped backwards, Carmen was in front of her son. Her eyes emitting off a cold, protective glare. Her claws unsheathed and filled with a small bit of blood after scarring her mate's face. This argument had gone too far, and now it was up to her to stop. "You're siding with him!?" The rain continued to fall hard; Jeffrey's fur was barely stained from the mud puddle he almost fell into. "You know you were worried about him, and now you're against my words?"

"You will not lay a claw on my son no longer, when you know he has been hurting because of your hatred for **Aaron**!" She bares her fangs at him. "I will no longer tolerate this!"

"You know he'll get killed out there! You know that one day he'll be roadkill, and Dandelion will lose a brother!" Jeffrey rose and

walked towards Carmen. His body tensing when his mate was now defying his choice. Carmen was this close to reveal the secret. But with her son cowering behind him, it wasn't the time. It had pained him to let him go but she wanted to see him happy, satisfied. Nothing could ever stop him, and she knew that one day he'll get into something that'll be irreversible.

But she had no place to intervene. It's his destiny.

Jeffrey had realized that he had lost his mate. It was clear that she wasn't resisting at all.

With his dark eyes scowling at his son, the fur on his back rising, despite his face that held back his fear. He makes a decision that'll change him and his son's relationship forever. That moment when he felt like breaking down. "You won't be here no longer." Jeffrey spoke in a cold whisper. His tears were failing him, now that he had to let his son go. Sunflower's eyes were left agape "You're kicking me out?"

He turned his head, avoiding any further conversation. "Heed my words."

Jeffrey then entered the small door and inside the two-leg nest.

Sunflower's heart dropped, now that his father was abandoning him. Just like his uncle. Carmen could feel her heart shattering. She swiveled her body and turned to her son; she wanted to hold him like a kit to a mother. "Listen." Her voice was shaky, as if she wanted to weep for him. Sunflower was already terrified for his life, his head burying to his mother's neck. "Don't stop being you." She said, resting her head against his cheek carefully. Her nose nuzzling against him. "Don't dim your light for no one."

"No.." Sunflower whispered; he didn't want his mother to stay behind. She was probably the only one who had ever been on his side, even if she didn't show it clearly. "Mama please don't!" He mewled, wanting to follow her inside. He was regretting from ever being out in the forest. But Carmen nuzzled her head against him, pushing him back. "Go." She spoke. "Go."

"**MAMA!**" He ran at her, but she had already gone into the little door. The rain pouring hard enough that he slipped from the porch due to the wet surface. The striking thunder terrified him, this was the kind of weather that he needed his mother the most. And now he had been pushed away. Just like that. So, he ran away, as fast as he could. The wind took him to the same way he had come from. His eyes watered in distress and grief of his family; he was shivering cold in the rain.

His legs were tired.

He fell onto the ground, defeated. His eyes bawling from what had happened. The feeling of hopelessness in his life that made him feel regret. Why has he taken this selfish path like his uncle? Is this what abandonment felt like for Aaron?

He wept for SunClan knows how long it have been. The rain was calming down, but all he was left is his own thoughts. He heard whispers of someone. Sunflower raises his head, his tearful eyes seeing that the spirit from the cave had followed him. The reminder of how his uncle looked was still there, though the spirit seemed almost sympathetic? Even though he was a ruthless leader of cats with bloodied paws, he knew that he wouldn't want his ancestor to fall in the same footsteps as him, and his own uncle. **Scourge knew too well.**

It was rare for him to feel like this, but he couldn't see him suffer anymore. Even if it was something he enjoyed back in the forest. The spirit of the bloody former leader, walked towards the fallen flower. His icy glare causing Sunflower to have bugs all over his stomach. Bugs that'll eat him alive and leave him nothing but dread. However, the spirit ends up wrapping his scarred, small body around him. He never spoke that much, but his actions were reminded everything was going to be alright. It was just a bad day, not a bad life.

Sunflower closed his eyes; a relieved sigh came of him. Everything was going to be alright.

Ghost'paw stood far away but can visibly see the small tom lying on the ground, alone.

The rain stopped.

Chapter **11,** *Part* **2**

Part 2: **The Storm below the waves**.

Under the dead trees lived a hideout that looks to be a fox den. The storms may be above us, but also within.

There was a warrior who lived with the clans for some time. He was an honorary warrior just like the rest of them, but he wasn't pleased with their practices and had a free-willed spirit. A she-cat that he fell in love with was shown to agree with his choice, and together, they ran away to become loners and live the life that they wanted. They lived a long, fulfilling life, even having three kits together. However, the tom was forgetting the rules of a warrior's destiny. Unfortunately for him, his family life ended in a tragedy.

The gray tom would see a cabin burning down as his mate yowled for his aid. He tried getting through the window, but the blazes and fallen wood blocked it off. The damage was devastating that he couldn't hear his mate calling for him anymore. The trees fell over and hit the house, crashing down into the roof. His attempts were futile now that the rest of the house had disintegrated d to ashes. That's when he knew, he had lost his family.

From a struck of lightning outside, Storm'strike woke up.

He breathed heavily, startled from the nightmares. It had been more frequent since Web'star's death, which he had caused. His eyes had a sour look, not just from thinking about the incident, but the plan that came from the incident, how it all played out. That's what he needed, he just needs to break the territory apart, just as how his ancestor had done moons back, but he doesn't really care for his family's history. It was going to be just him only, with a few companions on his side.

He eyed at the darkness surrounding him, deep in his thoughts. It wasn't long for his trusted deputy to notice him. "Storm'strike?" A raspy, monotone voice came from the pitch black of the underground den. Blue eyes peered into his leader's den. Storm'strike's pupils darted towards the corner, meeting the eyes of the **Prowler.** "Dusk'prowl." The large tom greeted. "You seem to look new every day. You caught another one?"

The blue-eyed tom purred, sitting down in front of the leader. "You know it, I caught him roaming the territory. He smells like TerraClan." He said, moving out the way to reveal that it was in fact, an apprentice from the territories. Hare'paw, who was being watched by other rogues that was keeping him as prisoner. Storm'strike rose from his den. His muscular arms stretched out in the front, and his back straightening after a long nap. He exited his den and approached at the feeble tom, not saying a word.

"Please! Please don't hurt me!" The apprentice begged, his form cowering under the cats that ridiculed him. The leader's eyes mimicked a certain warrior with virtuous values, but the moon wasn't as cruel and strict as him. When he heard the others, he frowned, there was no time for jokes and laughter, Storm'strike glared at the rogues and pushes them away with his body. "Silence!" He roared.

The crowd dissipated, obeying his orders to keep their maws shut. Hare'paw's body continuously trembled, his feeble physique was almost a burning reminder of someone, to Dusk'prowl at least. He was only watching in the background, hearing his leader's words. Storm'strike sniffed the air around Hare'paw. He smelt like a carcass. "What is your name?" He spoke harshly, expecting a straightforward question.

"Why should I give my name to you?" Hare'paw's claws unsheathed, it was comical to see him defend himself to a cat who could crush him in one sitting. "I don't want to ask again." Storm'strike grumbled. "What is your name?" He repeated, his voice quieter than his usual raucous tone. Hare'paw gripped the dirt below him, the dread weighing on his flea-ridden body. "Hare'paw." He cooperated.

"Hare'paw." Storm'strike murmured, sounding out the name. It made sense why he was named after a hare. "Do you know why my dear friend has brought you here?" His voice is ominously low, he was staying calm just so the tom could at least listen to him. "How should I know!?" Hare'paw mewled. "You **took** me away from my clan! And yet you expect an answer from me?" He snarled, his defensive attitude had amused the leader. "You are a fighter I say. But you don't want to make things worse when I'm giving you a chance to speak. I have some questions that I want you to answer." He shifted closer to the tom, and he sits down. His eyes not leaving from the cowardly cat.

"You must think I have webs in my brain to believe such lies coming from you. Kill me, it's what I deserve." The white tom's claws scraped against the dirt, he could barely move from the bruises and scratches he endured.

Dusk'prowl looked frustrated, the tom wasn't giving anything out. He eyed at the cats that was standing there, he made a soft gesture to bring the scavenger out. He turned her head and glared at Hare'paw. "Either you cooperate with us, or that mutt's going to have you for dinner." He threatened, Hare'paw bared his teeth at him. "I won't tell you anything! SunClan will be in ruins if you defy the law of destiny!"

"Destiny is nothing but horse-dirt!" Storm'strike's voice thundered. "It's corrupt. You'll have someone you loved just for SunClan to kill them off." His eyes scanned the tom's lanky body, he was this close to giving him a piece of his mind. "I will not let your false words ruin my plans. You tell us where the **Opal's eye** is, or you'll never see the light of day again." He growled, his body pressing against the tom, his claws grazing his fur. But that didn't seem convincing when he turned his head out of disobedience. That left the leader in fumes, he gazes at the cats and heard the dog barking loudly as it was left starving for a day. "Take him to the barn." He ordered. "Let him have his meal."

The cats tackled him down, one grabbed his scruff with their maw. "Let go of me!" The tom yowled while being dragged away. His voice fading away.

Storm'strike could feel the flames in his heart, the desire of **want**. He couldn't face the fact that he had failed, he couldn't fail. He wanted to win, not for himself, but for his family. Dusk'prowl could see the anger in his eyes, and when he doesn't talk, that was it for the night. The black tom knew too easily that his leader was shown to be ambitious, it was part of his blood. He was going to get his family back, and that's that.

Dusk'prowl saw his glares and then walked back into the darkness of the underground. There were thoughts coming from his mind, the memories that were numb to him now. And the feeling of hopelessness, and that he could relate in the loss of a family in some way.

But there was nothing to cry about, he had a life ahead of him.

Chapter **12**

The next sunrise came. The forest is drenched from the rain, the vibrant light of the sun shined through the sparkling lake, and the leaves of the trees.

It seemed to be a good day. The clans were wide awake, and the morning patrols were beginning to start like normal. But the environment felt... nerve-wrecking. He wasn't used to being thrown into the wild like that. His own father told him to leave, and that was that. When brought back to camp, Sunflower was silent. The clan didn't think he could come back. They probably thought his two-legs didn't want him anymore.

In the middle of a meeting, Emerald'glare was assigning patrols, Otter'star had left for unknown reasons, so he had to take care of the camp for right now. He oversaw Sunflower entering with Ghost'paw, his eyes grew wide. Of course, she isn't really supposed to be here due to Otter'star's orders. Something must've happened.

"Stay here." Ghost'paw urged. "You need to dry."

Sunflower stares at her with his yellow eyes. He was still shaken up from the storm. But he felt warmth coming from the spirit's protection, bounded to be in his side. Though, **Scourge** didn't trust cats. He always had distaste for clans, followed by his past of being harmed by one, and attempts to rule over the forest. He does see his ancestor's desire to be accepted. It was clear his father didn't want him. It's best to just watch from a distance. This was Sunflower's life to control, not his.

Cats were puzzled, though some reminisce the looks of an old member. An elder, known as Tidal'gleam, watched from afar. The tom was extremely nervous, the looks from others were weighing on him, and the coldness that stood behind him. The elder could tell a spirit following Sunflower. It was odd that it seems she was looking nowhere, but in **Scourge's** eyes, she was definitely gazing at **him.**

"Emerald'glare." Ghost'paw stood in the middle of the cave. "Could you postpone the meeting, it's urgent."

The deputy became awfully worried. He glances at Sunflower again before turning to Ghost'paw. "After the meeting." He responded. Ghost'paw didn't want that. There was something more than just Sunflower's arrival. She yowls at him. "The meeting can wait!" Her voice echoed, causing a commotion. The cats were murmuring and sharing tongues. Most were annoyed of the disruption. Emerald'glare's eyes furrowed in frustration. "Meeting dismissed." The tom murmured; he gestured Ghost'paw to get inside his den, that was right beside the leader's. Ghost'paw padded towards the den, leaving Sunflower to be on his own, and contemplate with his thoughts.

The tom could hear the bickering voices of them behind the stone walls. But he couldn't gather what they were saying. He could hear the scratchy noises of the spirit that sat beside him. His ears rang, and his vision became blurry from the sight of being around the cats he never knew. There was an ominous feeling that crawled on his back, and that the spirit could feel. Though, he never expressed verbally of it, yet. But he listened to those words of comfort. Everything is going to be alright.

"What are you doing!?" Emerald'glare hissed, standing in his dark den. "If your father finds out you're here, he'll-"

"It's not about him right now!" Ghost'paw snapped. "**You** need to let Sunflower in the clan." She demanded, her attempt to look imposing despite her young age was comical to the deputy. But there were more serious to speak about. Emerald'glare gazes at the small tom dissociating from the reality around. It saddened him. "Did his owners left him?" He asked. His tail swaying gently now that his soft spot was for this Softpaw. Ghost'paw eyed at Sunflower before shaking her head. "It looks to be more personal than just the two-legs abandoning him... I have a feeling that SunClan had predicted this."

"SunClan?" Emerald'glare tilts his head in confusion. "Don't you think it's too early for them to release signs? We haven't had a prophecy rain since I was a kit."

There was silence between the two, Ghost'paw shared a look of worry, and fear. It intrigued the deputy that someone like her would care for a mere cat. "Are you scared for him?" Emerald'glare asked, the apprentice's attempts to hide her emotions were futile. Her muzzle lowered into a frowning look. "I just don't think it's fair." She admitted. Emerald'glare lowered his head. "I will let him in the clan, but..." He looked at Sunflower again. The innocence of this specific tom created conflicted thoughts for him. He knows that **destiny** will come to him later in life. "I won't participate in anything SunClan may do. The precious time you spend with this tom, will all go in waste." He warned.

Ghost'paw didn't want to face that. She turned her head, abruptly ending their short conversation. "Just don't let him near that ginger tom."

The deputy nodded, seeing the apprentice walk away from his den. He then followed her down towards the middle of the cave where Sunflower sat. The small tom may be looking for Onyx'foot, who is still out on patrol with Monty. The apprentice approached the tom, whispering in his ear. "I'll come and find you in a few quarter-moons." She softly spoke to him; Sunflower's mind became foggy. He didn't know why, but he was starting to think about her more often. He nodded silently, still scarred enough to never speak to anyone.

He turned his head at Emerald'glare, who was approaching him with a light-hearted look. "Follow me." He said, his tail swaying from side to side. Sunflower looked at the other side where the spirit stood. **Scourge** didn't feel all that trustworthy to these cats, but he had to let the small tom figure it out, for now.

Sunflower follows Emerald'glare to the tunnel on the left side of the cave. His clan life waits for him on the other side, but the eye of sunset watches him from above, suspicious of his presence.

Chapter **13**

(Note: Just to clarify, Silver - Galaxy, Silverpelt - Milkyway)

Sunflower entered the tunnel, anxious of what's to come. Still, he hasn't made a peep. That concerned the deputy greatly.

"You can speak if you like. You're awfully distant than yesterday." Emerald'glare commented, his eyes noticing his dazed loom as if he was turning to the right side, where he only stared at the wall. "They didn't want me." The small tom finally spoke. "My parents. They didn't want me there anymore."

"Now, don't say that. I'm sure they still love you, right?" The tuxedo tom cooed. Sunflower's eyes furrowed. "I hate being lied to. They didn't want me, and if they loved me, I wouldn't be out of the house." His tail lashed. All because he spoke about his father's nonsense, and he ended up just like his uncle. His heart sank when he repeatedly went over that argument. His eyes were watering intensely. Nothing couldn't compare the grief of losing the cats he had been close to. He was stuck in feeling love or anger. But anger had overtook his grief.

"You can't be angry forever." Emerald'glare grazed his muzzle against the small tom's forehead to comfort him. "Scars will heal once you move on. It will take time for you to realize." He circled the small tom before continuing to walk down the tunnel, the sound of rushing water heard below the underground. Sunflower glances at Emerald'glare. He may have been right about letting his anger overtake his love. But he couldn't forgive them easily. Not after what his father had done to Aaron, and now him.

"Where are you taking me?" Sunflower asked, trotting behind him. The spirit wasn't there, but his chilling presence was still there. "I want to speak to you about joining the clan." Said Emerald'glare, entering the entrance of a new area. Sunflower felt doubtful, but the ethereal environment that the deputy had taken him changed

his mind in an instant. The light of the clear and smooth rocks was reflected off from the blue crystals that were buried by the sand. A lake is sat below of the waterfall. There was large, and colorful bioluminescent streaks underwater that looked to be something far away from the skies. They were circling around each other into a spiral-like shape. The middle gleaming brightly as the sun.

Sunflower stood on the ledge with Emerald'glare as he stared into the mighty cave. The walls filled with ancient carvings. "Woah..." Sunflower muttered. "This is..."

"Amazing?" The deputy added. "It's one of my favorite places; I think you'd like this." Emerald'glare padded down from the ledge. "This probably seems like I'm lecturing you."

"Please, you sound just like my fath-" Sunflower stopped. He shook his head and rephrased his words. "My elder."

Emerald'glare froze, his heart nearly skipped a beat. "He told you about the **Opal's eye**?" He asked. Sunflower never knew what the name was, but it looked familiar to him. "Not... whatever this is. But he told me, how it's more powerful than the Silverpelt." He followed the tall tom towards the bottom of the cave. The lake shined vividly with the crystals supporting it. There were hundreds of dots sprinkled on the spiraling streaks. The deputy was rather intrigued, it had raised some suspicion. "I'm sure some of our own elders had given wisdom to the outsiders." The deputy assumed, but that didn't stop him from feeling so... off. He looks similar to the old deputy, **too** similar.

"This lake represents all of SunClan." Emerald'glare sat on his haunches, staring down at the spiraling lake. "The stars show the life of a warrior who lived and ascended to the afterlife. And all are followed by the law of **destiny.**"

"Destiny..." Sunflower murmured, watching the spiraling silver lake closely. "Am I supposed to know this?" He turned his head, puzzled on what he should believe in. All his father spoke was something disgraceful about the outside world. Emerald'glare turned his head, staring at Sunflower. The memories of when he was a young kit couldn't leave from his mind. It's like if he had met Sunflower

before. But he couldn't pin on the past and what had happened to Crow'stalk. He clenched his jaw, continuously glaring at the lake. "Not that I don't want to force you. But to be aware. If you join, you'll have lots of responsibility in your paws. If **destiny** happens, it happens. It's something no one can't ever get away from. Not even the most powerful cats."

He had a moment to think.

This whole ordeal sounded suspicious; he felt that there was something that he shouldn't know. But all of his thoughts were blinded with an opportunity to feel freedom from the chains of his father's words. If he joined, he wouldn't have to suffer from the past again. Ever. "I'll join, then." Sunflower said, his face serious enough to support his words. "If it takes the Softpaw blood away from me, I'll join without a doubt."

His answer surprised Emerald'glare a whole lot. He usually thought cats like Sunflower would decline at the last minute. "Are you sure?" He responded. "This... this will be a life-changing decision."

"So?" Sunflower stood up; his head held high. "I have **nothing** to live for, those collar-wearing, two-legged freaks could choke a hairball all they want. I have friends to be there with, I have a purpose to be in the wild instead of confined to a prison."

"Eeesh.. at least don't get too harsh." Emerald'glare purred humorously. "You know there are rules against judgement."

"Yeah, yeah, I know." Sunflower's tail began to lash around in a quick manner. He was mostly excited about this. "I hope so." Emerald'glare stood on his four paws and nudged the small tom's head with his muzzle. "From now on, you'll be joined in the clan as an apprentice. I'll be your mentor and caretaker."

There was that question that took over the tom's mind. The names.

"What will my name be?" The small tom asked curiously, he pressed his forehead against the deputy's arms. Emerald'glare would give a brief look at him, he did look like the famed warrior, but to name him Crow'paw would've caused some problems. There were distinct

characteristics that Sunflower shared, his skinny figure, and his webbed paws.

That's when the idea came.

"Your name will be known as..." The deputy trailed off.

"Spider'paw."

Chapter 14

"Apprentices! Get up!"

An authoritative voice is called. The cats of the den groaned as they heard Needle'whisker's call.

Spider'paw, on the other hand was sleeping in his moss bed. He slept good after the ceremony that happened the day before. It had marked the beginning of a new life, only with a few negatives on his paws. Such as the wake-up call. The cats moved into their formation, but the black tom was still sleeping soundly. Orca'paw, the mischievous, gaze at the tom as he and other apprentices stood in a horizontal line. "Looks like he's a dreamer." He bared his sharp fangs, making it look like he was smiling. "Isn't he the new cat?" Shell-paw whispered. "He's got a lot of weight in his paws after all."

Spider'paw noticed the snores that happened previously during the night, changed to chatter. And a tension-filled silence. Needle'whisker stood over the small tom, her eyes piercing his soul as he locked eyes with her. "Get up!" The she-cat ordered. "I don't want to tell you this again!"

The tom was petrified of her stare. Her siblings were far gentler, and calmer. Not even the spirit himself even wanted to mess with her and those blue eyes, even if he has one himself. Spider'paw timidly crawled away, his quiet footsteps trailed beside a fellow apprentice. "Sorry... sorry." He mumbled; his ears pinned down as it points towards the ground. There was collective jeering of other apprentices, egging on Needle'whisker. But she didn't give them any mercy. "Quiet!" She barked. "Today is an important day and I want you all in your best behavior. For your mentors." Her tone became slightly softer.

When the warrior began explaining, Spider'paw was still in his nervous demeanor. He wasn't really used to getting yelled at due to his father. There was a split reminder that he didn't want to go

through. He still wants to move on, but he didn't know how to. Sapphire'paw, a she-cat that was standing right beside him, noticed his frozen state. His eyes didn't stay closed, his fur had shot up, and his loud heartbeats shut down everything around him. She didn't say anything yet, but something in the back of her mind wanted to at least prevent him from his emotions ruining his first day.

When the apprentices began leaving the den, Spider'paw quickly followed behind with his head down. Needle'whisker watched closely when he left the den, feeling almost intrigued. But she didn't know why, maybe it was because of the gathering. Half of the cave was empty, other than kits and queens. It confuses Spider'paw that Onyx'foot wasn't even here. Maybe he went patrolling or with Monty? He just didn't know for sure. He does know that his mentor, Emerald'glare mentioned of the new training cave that specialized with all apprentices throughout the clans. Today was the first day.

"Hasn't it been days since the cave was announced from Fire'light?" A slim she-cat, Koi'paw abruptly walks in front of Needle'whisker, she was curious about the cave more than anything, but Poppy'paw wasn't really a happy camper. "You've been thinking about some stupid cave so much, it's nothing special." She bickered. Koi'paw scoffed, the sun hitting her fur as the group left the cave. The purple and blue mostly stained the skies, the moon departing from her duty as she parted ways with the stars beside her. Only the eyes of amber hid above the clouds, watching for a specific cat.

"Now, now, it isn't some stupid cave." Needle'whisker added. "The cave will be something more than just a training site. Our history will belong in that exact cave, festivals, events, prophecies, you name it."

Spider'paw listened closely of their conversation. His head raising slowly, eager to listen more.

"Say, speaking of prophecies..." Orca'paw ran close and bumped at Spider'paw in the process, causing him to growl quietly. Sapphire'paw eyes furrowed when the apprentice ran over her paws. She glances at Spider'paw in the corner of her eyes, sensing the same feeling. *That was rude.*

"When will the next prophecy rain start?" Orca'paw trotted behind Needle'whisker's tail. "I've never seen them before." His paw was dragged along the sand. "And you think we'll be alive to see it? It's been two seasons since it occurred!" Koi'paw exclaimed. "Lots of us weren't here to see the first one-" Her voice cuts off; she wiggled her nose from the pollen, causing her to sneeze. They were walking past the tall grass near the gathering island. The group could see BlazeClan and BreezeClan from a distance. Spider'paw was struggling to keep up from the tall grass. His size was comical enough to entertain the invisible spirit as he watched.

"I know that!" Orca'paw retorted. "But I want to see it in the naked eye. I'm too impatient. I don't want the territory to be on fire while something truly amazing happens!" He leapt up and down like a kit. It was amusing to Needle'whisker, but she didn't want to reveal her emotions for right now. "It comes with patience, Orca'paw." Sapphire'paw's low, and soft voice spoke with firmness. Spider'paw was immediately caught off-guard by her voice. "SunClan will give us a sign if they are ready to address with the failed prophecy."

Her voice was rather mesmerizing, it was drowning out the chaos with the other apprentices of WaveClan. He felt intrigued with her personality, and he haven't really look it through, yet. She was probably the least annoying out of everyone.

But all of that was pushed aside, he was more interested about the training cave. Maybe that's where everyone had gone to, hence why the cave had been empty this morning. That also made him wonder about something, something that he felt that things may go awry. He was feeling too paranoid about someone watching him. The predatory eyes like daggers, poking his back at every chance he could get. And it definitely wasn't the spirit's doing, as he could feel the setting sun staring at his ancestor.

As minutes passed by, the argument had died down as the two apprentices Orca'paw and Sapphire'paw had stopped but remained heated of one another. Poppy'paw may have been the instigator of all things between the apprentice group. It wasn't long until they began to see other apprentices from other clans gathering at a clearing below the ledge. Spider'paw would slowly crouch behind Sapphire'paw. Behind the long grass, is a large pointy mountain.

Not as big as the Snowclaw, but just as big enough to spread through the entire border between TerraClan and WaveClan.

"Look!" Shell'paw gestured his paw. "I see cats!"

"We have eyes, you know." Needle'whisker remarked as she stood on the edge of the cliff. The crowd looks lively, many cats that weren't apprentices seemed eager to gaze at the new cave. They could spot the sisters, Fire'light and Cherry'fang sitting in the entrance. Spider'paw peeked his head from the long grass, he was just as amazed with other apprentices that saw the mountain for the first time. But what he wasn't excited about, is to see Cherry'fang again. But luckily, he could see his mentor approaching the area, just at the right time.

"Alright, apprentices." Needle'whisker sharply turned around, her set tone is far from being soft like minutes ago. She was back into her demanding self as always. "I want you all to be on your best behavior. Never embarrass us as we already have a leader who's in charge of that."

Spider'paw wasn't really listening to her orders, his silent paws drifted him away from the group. His black fur blended in with the shade under the large tree. He quickly trotted down the hill, the butterflies flew off when he makes his presence near the entrance. However, he would freeze in his tracks, locking eyes with the cat that was associated with Rusty'claw. Cherry'fang's eyes were vigilant, she could easily remember him on some occasions. But that also made her feel anxiety ridden. Spider'paw looks to be the one who knows a little too much, and the similarity was frightening.

The apprentice was petrified of her glares, she was just staring like a hawk awaiting its next meal.

However, someone had called his name.

"Spider'paw!" The deputy of WaveClan yelled his name. "I'm right here!"

Fortunately, Emerald'glare had come just in time. He wouldn't have

to suffer under the eyes of his attacker for a while.

Hopefully things will all go greatly with his first training.

Maybe.

Chapter 15

"Come on Rusty'claw! We'll be late!" Cinder'paw rushed through the midst of the clearing, twigs and leaves were stuck onto her fur.

Rusty'claw wasn't in the mood of her excitement. Of course he had to cover for a warrior. "You need to calm down." He scolded. "It's nothing special. I'm only doing this for a day." He strides across the bushy edges near the clearing, the sun's light blindly shining on his face. He had way bigger things to do than to watch someone that he clearly despises.

"Don't be a sad kitty! You know today is my first day!" The apprentice chirped, running across the clearing like some hyperactive kit, and bumping into others in the process. Rusty'claw could see a large crowd of cats entering the cave, as well as seeing Cherry'fang.. who was not pleased on seeing him with an apprentice. But she couldn't show her emotions in front of everyone, not even her own sister. It was clear that she was hiding on something personal, and the guilt was extremely unbearable.

It wasn't old news that her, Fire'light, Wood'bark, and Sun'star are the children of the sunrise warrior, and TerraClan's spirit. They were heavily known for the gift of combat, and close contact with SunClan. However, she had always wished there was something more ahead of her. It always seems like she was never satisfied, she was just known as the daughter of two powerful cats. That was it.

The only time she had felt like herself was when she was around with her uncle, the sunset warrior. Oh, how the kit side in her loved when he used to be joyous and felt like an actual family member despite his bluntness, and dry humorous traits. She would always mewl when parting away from him. It was the only happiness she could get besides her strained relationship with the rest of her family. She loved them, but she didn't know how to. In Rusty'claw's eyes, he could tell there was something wrong.

Meanwhile, Spider'paw's eyes darted all over the humongous cave. It was bigger than the cave that housed the **Opal's eye.** He could see a large opening above the cave, the light showered the clearing as a large symbol of the sun marked the stone grounds. Vines hung from the sides, there were ancient carvings on the walls, there were some of the elders that helped decorated the area. "It's so huge..." Spider'paw whispered, his eyes staring out to the skies. He sensed that it was close to Mid-sun. Emerald'glare didn't look too impressed. "It looks to be just a simple cave." He added. "Nothing special."

Spider'paw scoffed, circling his mentor. "Don't put too much pressure on her. You can see some of those old felines glamorize the place." The sunlight hit his glossy fur; his stripes were visible under the light. The white butterflies landed on his head, and another one on his nose. His pupils moved towards his nose. He had never felt this much value to the outside world. It was better than to be stuck in a soft world, as a Softpaw.

"Now, now. We're not here to explore or any of that. You need some training; it looks like you got one moon until you'll be old enough to become a warrior." He nuzzled the small tom's forehead. Spider'paw's eyes squinted, a purr emitted from the tom. He shakes his head as the butterflies fluttered off. "I'm focused!" He skipped all over the place, his tail curled upward in excitement. Emerald'glare was enjoying his determination. But there were some hidden concerns about his apprentice. He wanted to at least go a little easy on him.

"I don't want to start with the basics and whatever those mentors usually give you. I want to see what you can actually do." He sat in front of his apprentice, giving him some space. He had a look of encouragement, but he was also curious. "I want you to sneak up on me while I look away. I don't want to hear your footsteps, or any noises from you. If you're quiet, your target won't know."

Spider'paw wasn't sure how he could pull this off. He was always loud at times, coming from how he acted as a kit. "May I... change things just a little bit?" He asked. Emerald'glare nodded before turning his body away and closing his eyes. "Don't be afraid if you mess up. It's practice."

The small tom lashed his tail, his brain puzzled on what he could do. But he also feels some stares from other cats, it was causing his posture to weaken from the fear of great embarrassment. If he wasn't good enough, he had left the life of a Softpaw all for nothing.

Meanwhile, Rusty'claw and Cinder'paw was having a hard time. The apprentice was all too hyperactive and clumsy, he was even questioning his life choices about accepting Flint'stripe's demands, if it takes to get away from responsibilities and his family. "Come on! Mouse-brain! You can't just run at the prey; it'll be harder for you to get!" He yelled at her in a harshly manner, his paws stomped on the ground as his fangs bared at her. "You're no good if you mess up!"

The apprentice was trying hard to keep herself together, but the entire training session has been horrible. The tears were blocking her vision, those words were shooting her down. It was getting harder to train with him at every second it takes. "What are you doing!?" Rusty'claw stepped in front of her, his yelling had caught the attention from others, even with Spider'paw. "Why are you freezing up like some doe!?"

Spider'paw was hearing his mentor's word of approval, but seeing the same cat, mistreating a fellow apprentice was bothering him. He was insulting and berating her. He couldn't let the vulnerable be bullied by the one of power. He couldn't concentrate and listen to the ginger tom's discouragement all at the same time, he had to do something now.

Instead of going towards his mentor, he would crouch down and stalked across the cave's clearing. His paws silent as a feather, his ears flickered as he listened to the volume of Rusty'claw's voice. He was leaving Emerald'glare, and prowling towards the main target.

"I don't know!" Cinder'paw yelled at him. "I don't know what to do!"

"Exactly! You DON'T know! You're just some mindless rat! You'll never be good enough if you don't do what I ask!" Rusty'claw shoved the apprentice away, causing her to yelp as she collapsed. Some of the apprentices of other mentors were concerned, some

were willing to leave the cave. But Spider'paw wasn't going to leave, not after he get his little revenge for what happened that day.

When he was close, he climbed onto a rock. His eyes were sharp, and his tail hit the ground. His ears were pinned down, he was studying Rusty'claw's movement before he leapt off the rock. A screech was heard, Emerald'glare quickly opened his eyes. Spider'paw was clinging his paws against Rusty'claw's fur. His sticky pads imprinting his scarred, mattered fur. "GET OFF OF ME!" The ginger tom yowled; his paws were hitting the apprentice's head. Their tussling would catch the attention of many cats, they were surprised to see someone so small, take on someone bigger than him.

Spider'paw didn't even speak to him, he was biting his thigh, hard enough to cause a small scar. His hind legs moving upward as he bit down his neck too. Emerald'glare's ears flickered when hearing his apprentice go the other way. His natural scent faded off as he immediately opened his eyes. He ran and jumped at Rusty'claw splitting the two. "Spider'paw!" He roared. "Get off!" He would hold the apprentice down with his paws. He was astonished that his apprentice would try and take on someone bigger than him.

Rusty'claw felt humiliated that he had been attacked by the same cat who he tried to kill. He gave a scowling look at the deputy and the apprentice. His fangs remained outward, ready to latch on the skin of the enemy. "Control your apprentice!" He hissed. "He nearly scarred me!"

Spider'paw shook his head. "He was about to attack her; I had to do something!"

"Oh? And the dream cat wants to save the little one? What are you, some kind of goody two-paws?" Rusty'claw stood dangerously close to the apprentice, his green eyes that used to be seen as the brave, and compassionate in the past, was nothing more than a glare laced with poison. His claws were unsheathed, dragging along the rocky floor. Spider'paw's ears slowly began to pin down as the tom continued to mess with his personal space. "Softpaws like you should learn some manners." He sneered.

Emerald'glare shoved Rusty'claw away, he hissed at him. His strong arms blocking the ginger tom's way. "You will not hurt any of these cats." He glances at Cinder'paw, who stood behind the deputy as well. "Your crimes will be determined by Sun'star if you ever lay a claw on my apprentice." His claws were unsheathed, ready to retaliate if needed. The ginger tom scoffed at his petty threat. "Do you even know who I am? I'm an ancestor to Firestar! I have the right to-"

"To do what?"

A rumbling voice of Fire'light appeared from the shadows of the cave. She wasn't happy. Rusty'claw turned around, he adjusted himself. "Nothing." His tone went quiet. Of course, the sunrise's daughters are watching him. With one wrong move, the spirits will know everything. but he wasn't going to let them stop being who he is. He's Firestar's ancestor for SunClan's sake! He wasn't letting this Softpaw ruin his shine.

"Exactly." Fire'light stepped in front of the tom. "I'll be speaking to my brother about this soon."

"Of course you will, you have nothing better to do." Rusty'claw added, he gave a glare at the three cats before trotting off. This was possibly the most embarrassing memory yet. The conversation with Sun'star will be awkward when he gets back. Cherry'fang would watch her friend leave the cave in defeat, there was dread knowingly that the two were into some trouble.

"Thank you, Fire'light." Emerald'glare bowed his head. "He's been a spine on my hip for the longest." The deputy then stared at Spider'paw. Despite feeling angry at the apprentice for making a stupid decsion, he was proud that Rusty'claw was finally put into place. "My snappy apprentice saves the day, I suppose." He jokingly poked his apprentice's forehead with his wet, pink nose. Spider'paw turned his head away in denial. "I'm not snappy!" He murmured stubbornly. Fire'light purred, she gazes at Cinder'paw worryingly. She looks so shaken up, it was making her feel guilty. "BlazeClan will take good care of him." She informed. "You don't have to worry."

"Come along, Cinder'paw. I'll take you home." The she-cat urged, her tail swaying gently. Cinder'paw quickly raced off and behind the she-cat. Her warming aura was curing the trauma she endured. But she'll forever be grateful that Spider'paw was the one to step in. With one last look exchanged from both apprentices, she feels that in the later future she'll recall that memory and return the favor.

Spider'paw was also unsettled by the experience. He wasn't the tom to interfere as much, but coming from his bravery, it had impressed his mentor. Only just a little. "Don't be reckless, next time." His mentor warned. "We'll try other things, but not somewhere near... him." He mentioned the ginger tom. "Trust me, this wasn't the only time." Spider'paw recalled, his eyes rolling. He then jumped up and moved in front of his mentor. "I hope it isn't too late to try... again?"

Emerald'glare was quite reluctant, but it was only his first day. He didn't want to cut this dream too short.

"Alright." He agreed. "We'll try again."

Chapter **16**

The skies have gone dark. The stars gleamed with its powerful might, but some say that the skies will fall upon them as we speak. The sun will fall, and the truth will be told.

Rusty'claw had took a long walk back home on purpose. He was still so angry about what had happened. But it didn't overshadow what had happened before, or when they first met. It feels like Spider'paw was taking his only dream in life, to be better than what his father was. A cat, cowardly enough to leave their family behind when things got bad between him and his mother. Jealousy raged over him, the new Softpaw seems to have all things good. But Rusty'claw? He just wasn't there yet.

There was also a feeling about him, just as how any cat would've acted around him. He looked like a cat, the old deputy before Otter'spark's short reign. The crow had always been a legend in the forests, but he also had a huge ego. At least in Rusty'claw's eyes when he last saw him as a kit. He was never seen again after that one night. All he saw, was his body falling off the ledge. But that made him question, where did he go? Did he actually die?

That is, until he felt his fur being fiddled with. He jumped, hearing a call of a black avian flying above him. His heart was beating in an instant, and his eyes shot up as he stared at the skies. He could see black feathers falling from a tree. He swiveled all over the place until realizing that he had fell through a large web. "Hngh...." The flame-colored tom grumbled. "Just a crow."

As he continued on through the path, he would find himself passing by the gathering island, and to the grassland. He could see the camp below the hills of long grass. A tree hanging over the camp as they prepared for dusk patrols. Sun'star spots the warrior, his brows furrowed, he was filled with great disappointment from what had happened earlier. He was waiting for him patiently, having no need to call him out in front of everyone.

The ginger tom wanted to hide, being spoken to a son of the great spirits. It was embarrassing. For someone like him, he should've been posing as the mighty heroic fire. But that wasn't the case. His plans were failing, and the guilt rushed over him. He was going to have a lot to say when they find out. Soon. As he set foot in the camp. He observed the rocky, sandy hollow. The cats were used to sleeping out in the clearing, or in the tunnels scattered all over the territory.

The cats didn't pose any threat with his presence. But some, like Flint'stripe, weren't happy. Fire'light was nowhere to be seen, obviously. But he can see his brother and mother far away. They didn't speak to him, like what Yellow'petal promised. He had a lot to work on, he needed to let go of the pain from the past. But he didn't know how. He quickly trotted his way to the leader's den, hoping no one else will look at him. Sun'star could see his head peeking into his dark den. The two were exchanging stares. "Don't act shy." He spoke. "It's nothing bad, really."

"Yeah, very believable." Rusty'claw sneered, sitting in front of the tall tom. On the inside, he was greatly unsettled by the calmness of his leader's voice. He could feel a scolding coming out of him. Sun'star looked at him and shook his head. "I'm disappointed." He chided. "In what way did you think it was good to tell Cinder'paw all those things about her? Flint'stripe only chose you for your compassion to work with apprentices... or what your brother had said in the past."

"I only said that to get the deputy role. Isn't that a requirement? Or am I not mistaken?" Rusty'claw leaned his head forward, his paw pressed on the ground. There was a lot of confidence within him. "There's also another process to go through, which is by votes. Being deputy doesn't just fall in your paws. Your great ancestor was given that role for a reason. He had things that... you awfully lack of."

The ginger tom stood up on his four paws, offended. "I don't lack anything!" He growled. "I have his fur, his eyes, and his spirit! I have seen him in my dreams and everywhere I go. We could be great; this whole clan can be great if **I** were deputy!" His claws slipped from his paws, gripping on the dirt. Sun'star remained

unfazed. He was mostly worried about his ambitions. They were impressive, but his pride was blocking all the good things in life.

"That's the problem." Says the leader. "You can't think of everything different about yourself. You lack the spirit that what made your ancestor succeed. You can choose to be better in many things, but you can't rely on the past forever." His eyes stared deeply in Rusty'claw's eyes. The ginger tom's claws gripped the dirt. "So, you're saying I'm not fit to be a deputy?" His voice was low, but angry. He was in denial. "You're not ready. And I don't think the rest of the clan would accept you easily." Sun'star briefly closed his eyes, looking away. The vision was there, but he couldn't do it. Knowingly by his behavior from the past, and the present.

"You're only letting a rogue she-cat tell us what to do! You don't know what she's up to! Burning'tail will destroy our clan!" The ginger tom's voice was loud and clear. Sun'star still remained in his spot. Like a statue. "And so will you." He retorted coldly. "If you were to be called by my father to a prophecy, the forest will burn down because **you.**" He growled, until his voice had gotten calmer. "If I can give you one task, it'll make me reconsider my decision."

His voice was like glass tearing through his skin. What was left of his morals and dreams were the hot fiery blood leaking from an open wound. He was astonished someone like Sun'star could say that. His own mentor to be exact, who helped him through all of his apprentice years. And now he was turning against his dreams, all of their history felt like a big lie. He closed his eyes and led out a long sigh. "What."

"Speak to your mother." The leader urged, his eyes turning sorrowful. "She's been your only supporter since the beginning of your life. For her to lose you, would be the cause of her sickness." He said, moving close to him. He was speaking to him like father and son. "She's getting old, and I want you to cherish every heartbeat with her."

Rusty'claw could feel his body turning weak. He hated hearing things about his mother, but that other side of him made him feel more guilt than ever. He was mirroring his father's failure. He had done nothing to be there with his family. Sun'star sounded more

convincing, and he could do that easily if he wanted the job. But knowing that this was serious, his leader was begging for him to be better. That led to a conflicted decision.

"Okay." He sheathed his claws; the tears were visible in his green eyes. "I'll do it."

Sun'star was proud of his decision. But he knew he couldn't linger for too long. "When you are ready." He speaks. Hearing his name being called, he stood from his spot and moved from the den, trotting off. Rusty'claw closed his eyes, breathing slowly. He then rose from the den and padded back to the warrior's den. He was left in silence.

He was thinking about his past, his father, everything. He couldn't face the fear of losing his own family that he was lucky to have. To lose his brother and mother, would lose the true spirit of himself. And then, when he looked up to the skies. The stars were starting to twinkle intensely. The cats around him were noticing that too, it raised some confusion.

Meanwhile in WaveClan, the medicine cat could sense a powerful aura above him. Oleander'cloud felt disturbed.

"Oleander'cloud! Oleander'cloud!" Ruby'paw approached him in a hurry. "The skies are falling!" She yelled, causing a lot of attention on her from other cats. The elder, Tidal'gleam approach behind the crowd. "I feel a presence!" She announced, others filled with panic as other voices are heard. "We need to go outside! Now!"

The cats rushed out of the cave. Otter'star, who was fast asleep, heard the cats yowling. He woke up to see an empty cave, and ran out from his own den, trailing behind.

Emerald'glare, and Spider'paw was close to home. The small tom would notice something in the skies. His eyes grew wide, reflected off the multicolored stars falling from the dark blue skies. "Emerald'glare!" He yelled. "Look!"

All cats of each clan were immersed by the meteor showers. Each of

them was shown with color, representing each warrior under the **Opal's Eye.** Even the rumbling storm became easily infatuated, but it was what he and Dusk'prowl have been waiting for. The forests were lit up by the number of stars that trailed the skies. The power of the showers was unbearable to hold for each medicine cat to feel. It was leaving them exhausted of how soon SunClan was sending them a message after the death of Web'star.

Of what each would dream of, is an answer. The answer was finally given with a flaming star. But the white aura surrounding it, was confining the fallen star to be together as one. The twirling strings resembled a web, the eyes of Oleander'cloud glowed into white. Seeing a vision and hearing the prophecy into his sharp ears. He worded it all in an ominous whisper.

"**The flames will be united to oppose the coming storm.**

But beware the other as his path may differ. The clans will burn over the death of the broken-hearted."

Chapter **17**

Spider'paw couldn't get that moment out of his head.

He stood on that ground, gazing at the dark skies. The stars were falling in front of him. But one of them felt so significant than the other thousands. The flames of fire and the silver streak of light bounded as one fallen star. He woke up, feeling light-headed. He was hit with many visions that caused him to lack sleep. He didn't sleep until the moon was nearly setting. All he could think about was the fallen star. He thought that the world was going to end right there.

It wasn't long for him to wake up and see that the apprentices were still sleeping in their moss beds. He could notice the crowd murmuring outside of the den. The deputy stood on the cliff, and seeing Ghost'paw standing below everyone else had piqued his curiosity. Spider'paw quietly trotted amongst the exhausted. He peeked his small head, hearing the words of a similar ginger cat.

"They may have been hinting an ancestor of Firestar!" A cat's voice was heard near the rock. Many of the warriors' voices supported their claim. "It has to be Rusty'claw, no?" Another cat spoke. Only crickets were heard from the silent crowd. The mention of that name led to flashbacks of yesterday. "Him?" A she-cat named Quiet'ripple had a scowling expression of that assumption. "He couldn't even be like Firestar, even if he tries! That tom is nothing more than trouble." She shook her head.

"There is no time for petty fights!" Emerald'glare yelled harshly to the crowd, raising his authority over others. "The sun has made their presence overnight, and we must take action to every warning sign we get. We cannot repeat this like those seasons ago. The numbers of our warriors were heavy."

The entirety of the cave was left silent. Of course, that incident left a scar of many cats, including the red eyes that peered in the skies staring down at the black tom who set foot into the clearing of the

cave. Ghost'paw had spotted him in the corner of her eyes, there was something about him that she couldn't put her mind into. Her eyes were watering, she was slowly losing control of herself each day. The weight on her shoulders was bringing her down, and she couldn't take it anymore. She quickly disappeared into the crowd and ran out when the distressed voices were starting to increase in volume.

Spider'paw took this as a bad sign, but he didn't want to leave her alone in tears. Instead of staying for the meeting, he followed behind.

Ghost'paw, riddled with the stress and pressure, she broke down as she sat in the entrance of the cave. Her body quivered as she wept, the tears raining onto the dirt like aggressive streams from a flood. Her father's words of disappointed loomed over her like dark, heavy clouds. It was a big reminder to Spider'paw of seeing himself breaking down in the middle of a forest. The yowls and screams he released, the feelings of joy and innocence washing away. It was unbearable, and he couldn't take it. He was only moving on for his own peace, knowingly it was still replaying in his mind. Every day.

Finally, he says something.

"Ghost'paw?" He speaks in a shaky voice.

Her body stiffened, swiveling her head to see the same black tom. "Sunflower?" She answers, memorizing the name he had told days ago. Spider'paw frowned over the callback of his old name. The memories were still fresh. "It's Spider'paw, now."

The she-cat could see the weak tom laying in front of her, under the gloomy clouds as it drenched his fur. What she couldn't forget, was the spirit protecting him from her. The freezing cold was unforgiving to her body, those blue eyes could cause much trouble, and echo from the bloodiest of the past. She could sense his presence near Spider'paw. **Scourge** was watching carefully.

"Oh! uh..." She shook her head. "I'm sorry about that... uhm-"

"Hey... hey, it's alright." The black tom purred. "You don't have to

apologize for anything. I see that you're stressed." He sits with her, his tail swaying as he gazes at her eyes. It was weird to why he had felt this way based on her emotions. Ghost'paw's eyes wanders off to avoid the voices that taunted her. "I am stressed, actually." She admitted, her voice became agitated. "I'm surrounded by imbeciles, you see."

"Oh, I get it." He spoke. "It's quite torturous when you're the only one with common sense." His eyes were focused on her. The gray she-cat gazed back at him, there was a lot of tension with silence. She just didn't really know how to continue a conversation without being awkward, Spider'paw felt the same. He looks away, embarrassed of what he had done.

She's going to look at me like I'm trying too hard...

Ghost'paw blinked, before turning towards the dimly lit sun. It was pretty gloomy out today, possibly from rain. "Maybe." She responded, staring out to the sky. "I wish things would go accordingly to plan, if SunClan had listened. Hopefully, the prophecy will knock some sense."

Spider'paw nodded, there was an idea in his head that could take her stress away. It was only just him being nice. "We could take a stroll around the lands if you're up for it. Maybe a tour?" He asks, the tone of his voice was soft, and was giving her the encourage to let loose for a bit. Ghost'paw was rather hesitant, the spirits would've gotten angry if she took her focus away from her job. Though, she couldn't really say no. Peter had told her a lot about him. "It won't hurt anyone." She says, standing from her spot. "It is best that we should get back here in about sunset."

Spider'paw expected a no. His eyes bulged when she accepted, his heart was like a pounding drum of a parade. "Oh-? Really?" He tilts his head. His reaction seemed comical. She's already enjoying his presence. "Yeah? you thought I said no?"

He shook his head, jumping from his sitting position. "I just thought cats like you always work all the time. BreezeClan must've been working you to death, hm?" He joked, not realizing her true identity. It was only best for Ghost'paw to reveal herself. She then

trots out of the cave, the long vines passing by her back. "I'm not from BreezeClan, really. All of that was a lie."

"Really?" He followed behind. "You got some secrets I'm not aware of?" He teased.

Ghost'paw's tail curled upward, pointing to the sky.

"Maybe. But that's not the true focus for right now. We have somewhere to be." She says, following the trail of large trees, and a shaded path.

This was going to be interesting.

Chapter **18**

It has been a few hours later. They've already toured most of the territory, such as clans and their camps. even the landmarks that were there for nearly hundreds of seasons.

The two cats joyfully ran across the meadow of TerraClan, the clouds clearing up as the light broke through the darkness.

It was like all of those seasons ago, where two cats brought the sun back to life.

"I thought SunClan was just a myth!" Spider'paw yelled as he raced through the tall grass, the white butterflies fluttering off from his direction.

"SunClan was never a myth!" Ghost'paw ran in front of him, she leaped off a rock that sat onto the center of the meadow. "They've always been there since the beginning!" She yells back at him, her paws giving her much flight over a sea of grass. Her legs rushed down the hill, and she was happier than before.

She then stopped at a cliff facing the lands away from the border. It was the end of the vibrant greenery that fell to the wasteland ahead of her, all the dead trees drying under the intense light, and the bones of cats that have croaked from unfortunate events The wind breezed between her fur. She never experienced what had happened to that land, but she knew the stories that had changed the clans' lives. Her eyes stared down at the dead forest. She turns her head, hearing Spider'paw approaching her.

He paused, staring out to the lands of emptiness. His mood changed completely.

"What happened over here?" He turns his head, breathing intensely. "Everywhere is so... green and abundant. But this here... it's-"

"Dead..." Ghost'paw cuts him off. "It's been like this ever since I was

born."

Spider'paw focused the dry ravine trailing across the dead field. All the grass and flowers withering away. He may have thought that the spirits could do something about this land, it was odd. "Why haven't they done something?" He stares at her, his eyes filled with concern. "They have." She answered. "But they only spewed false promises for this land. It was left to rot out of fear and grief." Her eyes glanced at the dry dirt; the intense wind moved the dead trees. Not even the cold spirit could touch this land with his white paw.

"They shouldn't give up hope. They're deemed the spirits of clans for a reason..." He leaped below the cliff to the closest rock, descending from the territory. Ghost'paw's eyes narrowed, and she followed the black tom. "I don't think you should be here." She warned. "It's forbidden for a reason." She moved in front of him, her tail lashing with annoyance and agitation. "I don't want you to get hurt." She speaks.

"Oh please..." Spider'paw scoffed. "This land shouldn't have anyone living there. Look at how empty it is!"

Ghost'paw turned around, staring at the empty land. He was right after all.

"Still. I won't let you get hurt when you're around me." Her eyes were staring directly at his yellow eyes. It was somewhat endearing to him. "Okay, good two-shoes. I'll try and behave." He joked, walking past her as he jumped from the remaining rocks and to the dry ground. His paws were helping him stick to the edges. "Goody two... what!? Do you mean paws?" Ghost'paw retorted. She followed him to the dry lands; her ears were pinned due to how nervous she was feeling. She didn't think entering there was right.

"Two-leg wording." Spider'paw responded, his ears picking up the faint noises of wind and trees moving. "Care to tell me why the land became this way?" He asked, continuing to explore.

"It was because of an incident." The gray she-cat explains. "The sunset brother was dealing with an old foe from the island territory. His daughter has been prophesized to defeat **him**. But in the end, it

caused misfortune to everyone else. The sunset refused to give his daughter away, and it caused the entire territory to collapse under the hands of his might."

There were voices of agonizing mewls and the ground that was turning white all around him. The winds of the dead lands had gotten dangerously cold enough to freeze his paw pads. The dark, unforgiving winter caused hysteria to all, as kits lay dead beside their mothers. The great winter had caused wails of grief across the clans. But it wasn't just the innocent warriors, but the pain from the suns themselves. In the end, it was all just a vision. He couldn't imagine being surrounded in all of the chaos. It was changing his demeanor entirely. "Then...?" He asks, begging for at least a happy ending to a grim story.

"The sunset was able to fight him off." Ghost'paw continued. "But he still refused to give his daughter away. He loved her to the point of nearly destroying everything he built for. It was to the point of causing her to become deathly sick and that there was no turning back until she had given herself to the enemy or die a painful death, leaving the territory in disarray."

Spider'paw didn't know how to react. It was getting worse than what he had hoped for. For whatever reason, he could hear the pained cries of the apprentice daughter. Weeping and crying for her father to let her be. The more the sunset waited, the more time that he would lose. The story became torturous to hear. He could see that all of the bones scattered across the dry floor were all victims of the sunset's selfishness. It was too much to bear.

Ghost'paw could tell that his emotions were building up. She stood there, staring at the large cracks that marked the ground. Tears escaped from her eyes. There was guilt knowing that the territory was left unmarked. And that the memory of the daughter was left to rot. "She did disobey the sunset's orders and sacrificed herself. The prophecy was concluded, but it left her memory here in this land."

"This is the land they're reminded of her?" He sounded angry. The black tom trots around the desolate lands, walking straight into the dead forest, not aware of his surroundings. "She shouldn't be remembered like this. **No one** shouldn't." His face was distressed,

looking around at the environment that was destroyed from the great blizzard. He could see an abandoned barn and track down a smell of crow food. "They haven't even tried." He murmured, walking inside the abandoned barn. His legs were tired, but he also needed some time to think. He sits right at the entrance; he notices his eyes watering.

It was quiet, only the wind was being heard above. The trees scratched the roof, Ghost'paw didn't have any words to say. She sat right with the tom, and her eyes remained with sadness as the environment became distant again. "You may have been right." She added. "The spirits should claim this land as memory. It's been like this for seasons."

Spider'paw turned his head at her. "And they haven't called back to that? They just decided to leave her memory to waste?" He had a look of denial. He turns his head away. "That's pathetic." The black tom stared out to the forest. "I-... mean... can you blame them?" Ghost'paw looks at the dark, creaky wood below her. "It's a memory everyone wishes to forget. But they're faced by the trauma and mistakes that are right in their faces. The sunset was grieving, so he never tried anything."

"But..." Spider'paw paused. "Her story **should** be recognized, no matter what. She sacrificed herself for everyone to live." He responded in an unrelenting tone. He never agreed to leave this place to desolate and dishonor the daughter. But what could he do other than to bicker and complain? It was nothing in his power to improve that. Nor are the mistakes that led to her forcefully sacrificing. After all, one's **destiny** should **never** be interrupted. It'll follow the mistakes that the sunset had caused long ago.

Ghost'paw didn't fire back. She just stares out to the woods with him. It was now calmer than before. The story was in the past, and it was up for them to decide how to end their adventure, like promised. But neither didn't really want to leave. Both had found each other pleasant in a way.

However, Spider'paw noticed something. His ears flickered as there were quiet, rummaging noises behind him. The ghost was the one to notice a large canine standing above the second floor. The

ominous creaking, the low growls. His face staring at the figure above Ghost'paw was obviously causing her to turn her head. She whispered. "What are you staring at?"

He darted his pupils above her. There was a bad feeling to the tension-filled silence. It didn't take long for her to realize it until it was too late.

The canine jumped out of the second floor, and he barked loudly as his razor-sharp teeth attempted to dig into Ghost'paw. The SunClan apprentice was fast. She moved out of the way. But Spider'paw was the one to have his body get dug into. The tom yowled as Sully bit his neck down, hard enough to have the blood leaking from his throat. "NO!" Ghost'paw cried, running at the dog, her claws were unsheathed. She ran at his face with full force, digging onto his snout and causing deep wounds to his eyes. Sully ran all over the barn and knocked her straight to the wall, his teeth were constantly escaping her arms, but she kept them closed. She was at the risk of losing her arm.

A rusty shotgun was hooked onto the wall. Ghost'paw was ramped into it, causing the gun to fall. The trigger was pulled by impact and shot straight at the roof, causing some of the wood collapse. Sully had thought the gun would've shot him, but it didn't. It humored the hound that these cats were desperate to live. They haven't even noticed Hare'paw's body being hidden near the place.

Ghost'paw looked at the gun and then at the falling wood. She took advantage of that and ran underneath the dog. Sully got on his hind legs and gripped her back using his teeth. He threw her across the floor with force. The blood was leaking all over her back.

She grunted in pain. The dog approaching her with a sinister glare in his black eyes.

The gray she-cat was more worried about Spider'paw than her own life. He was bleeding tremendously, and he laid there. His ears were ringing from the loud gunshot that could signal other rogues that lived in the area. He was barely breathing, and his entire body fell sore and lifeless. He breathed heavily, trying to take control of his young life, ending so soon. He scratched the floors, trying to make

the last fight for his life. He didn't want to die. He never wanted to die this young.

His vision fades to black; his body grew weak until he couldn't move no more.

But a voice inside his head wasn't letting him go.

The ghost wasn't letting him fall under the power of cats and dogs that were bigger than him. **Scourge** had plans. He wasn't going to let death overcome him.

Spider'paw hears his heart dying out, until it started beating again. A feeling of adrenaline was causing her body to shake. His claws were unsheathed, and the color of green bled into his eyes. The black tom felt control over his own body, but his power was unmatched to his tiny physique. He didn't know what the ghost was doing to him, but he felt strength. He felt determined. And now, he was going to let that dog have it.

Ghost'paw limped towards the empty stall. She held out her paw, trying to use the power that she was given. Her inexperience was humorous to the dog. And yet, Sully had thought SunClan could've been better. "Weak." He growled, the blood of Spider'paw leaked from his teeth. He stood dangerously close, glaring with malice. He was preparing to finish her off with a blow.

"**NO!**"

The dog was distracted. A green streak of light appeared in front of him. Spider'paw headbutted the large canine with the power of a raging bull. The green eyes gave the dog a sole reminder of a fiery hero. Sully stumbled onto the wall, hitting his head. His eyes had enlarged from the force of a small apprentice, he nearly got himself an injury on impact. It caused the dog to stare at Spider'paw in shock. Ghost'paw's maw dropped. The bleeding apprentice who she thought was dead, lived to defend her. The blood stained his black fur, he panted heavily.

There were no words to exchange. He just stood there and watch. He turned to look at Ghost'paw, until hearing commotion outside of

the barn. "Oh no.." The gray she-cat murmured, she quickly dragged herself from the floor and ran out of the barn with her legs. "Follow me!"

Spider'paw stood there for a few more seconds. The raspy, cold voice spoke to him.

"*You should start moving, the Storm will kill you if he finds out.* "

The black tom took that message and began running out of the barn. Leaving a trail of blood.

He ran with Ghost'paw across the clearing, his speed improving from the power that was given to him. Although, his tracking of blood leaking from his neck had caused a certain someone to follow him right back. The wind hits his face, his vision was blurry. Spider'paw turns his head to see the blue eyes of death chasing him down. The Prowler was pursuing the apprentices on foot. Dusk'prowl was followed by others who were on patrol, but he rather had this job in his own paws.

He was fast, fast as a large-spotted feline. He was never the cat you could outrun. He was using the wind to manipulate his speed as he got close to the duo. His eyes squinting on where he should pounce at. He was more focused on the smaller one, he runs at a pointy rock and jumped across the skies. His claws unsheathed as he reached out for Spider'paw's hind. There was a tunnel that leads up back to the cliff. Spider'paw could feel the blue-eyed cat jumping up in the air. He saw Ghost'paw enter the tunnel. He then abruptly stops his running, causing the egotistic cat to collapse and fall on his side. The rogues stopped immediately as they were in awe. Ghost'paw didn't run until Spider'paw had followed her in. Even she was surprised.

"Gah-!" Dusk'prowl coughed from the amount of dirt on his face. "Damn it!" He swore. His legs were numb, and the adrenaline was causing him to become dizzy. He glared at the small tom with built-in hatred. No one shouldn't outrun him; he was going to make him pay.

Spider'paw continued on to the tunnel, Dusk'prowl regained his

balanced and chased him.

"**COME ON! COME ON!**" Ghost'paw urged, she was climbing up the rocks. Her eyes were carefully watching the small apprentice fit through the narrow parts of the tunnel. He grunted with pain from the scars on his neck. "Give me a minute!" He snaps at her. His paws were stuck onto the rocks, he climbed with all of his strength. **Scourge's** possession was helping him. His head turned, seeing that Dusk'prowl was willingly entering the tunnel. His lanky arms reaching for the small tom's tail.

"**GET BACK HERE!**" The rogue hissed, swiping at Spider'paw's ankle.

"Eat dirt!" The small tom sneered. He got ahold of the rocks, kicking them down and causing the raging tom to slip and fall. He continued his way up to the border of TerraClan. Ghost'paw helps him by gripping her fangs firmly to his scruff. The two jumped right out of the tunnel, falling onto the grass. The pain was getting to him. He fell right on the ground, twitching and mewling from the large scar on his throat. Ghost'paw held him down, the tears flowing.

"**HELP!**" She called. "**HELP!**"

A group of TerraClan patrols her yowling across the tall, bushy trees. The sun was shining through the forest as it began to set. They saw the pair, and the black tom bleeding. The voices of distress were drowning out, Spider'paw could feel the possession leaving his body. All he heard was the voice of his possessor until he became unconsciousness.

"*Stay down. Help will find you.*"

Chapter **19**

Later that night.

Only the stars twinkled above as the moon warrior stared down at the rogues. Her amber eyes were hidden behind the moon. She was observing them carefully, foreseeing the future of chaos.

But what shocked her, is spotting a similar cat, belonged to the great sunrise and TerraClan's founder, roaming the empty lands to seek for the Storm.

Dusk'prowl was heavily disappointed of himself. How had an apprentice fooled him to take such fall? He knew that he was chosen deputy for a reason, for his murderous pursuits on the enemy, and many things that was approved in the eyes of Storm'strike. He was expecting a scolding from him at any moment. There were whispers and gossip coming from behind. The rogues that saw him falling off the rock, they were taking joy from of it.

"**Did you see him lose to that cat?**"

"**Storm'strike's going to be mad when he finds out.**"

"**How could he lose to someone smaller than him?**"

"I heard that!" The rogue snapped, turning his body towards the gossiping cats. He snarls. "If you have anything to say, you can say it to my face."

Parsnip'sting howled in laughter. "You want to get mad at us? You've humiliated yourself! She dragged her two front paws across the floor. The deputy was getting angrier as more negative words piled onto him. "Sully could've done way better than you." A tom named Jet added. he was currently eating prey that was stolen from TerraClan, his voice was filled with muffled, eating noises. "And yet you name yourself as the fastest cat in the forest."

Dusk'prowl scoffed. "I never said that. It was a name from you all. I sense jealousy in some of you."

"Jealousy, I think not!" Jet sneered. "What will happen if Storm'strike finds out, hm? He'll demote you from deputy rank in no time."

The black tom growled; he turned his head away to avoid Jet's words. He wasn't going to get demoted, he and Storm'strike have been friends for three seasons, it wouldn't be easy for him to just get the boot out of nowhere. He was always going to stay loyal for him, always. "*Focus on yourself, he isn't worth it.*" The deputy mumbled to himself, ready to walk back to his own personal den, but Jet wasn't giving up.

As Dusk'prowl began to leave, he heard something that caused his heart to stop.

"Maybe that family you've abandoned was all for nothing. Your pride will be your own downfall."

"What was that?" He turns his head, his eyes consumed with emotionlessness. A fire of rage, his face cold as ice, belonged to his ancestry of the ancient forests grew tremendously all over his body. His chest was feeling hot, his face left cold. Jet continued to laugh it off. "Are you deaf?" His fangs poked right out of his muzzle, his jaws stuck together as he continued to jeer and mock at the deputy.

"You know damn well I heard what you said." Dusk'prowl quickly approached him, his growls vibrating his throat. "Don't you dare speak on my blood." He warned. "You don't know who you're talking to." His nose rested on top of Jet. His fangs were revealing themselves, and his claws were unsheathed. He didn't want to think about that memory, they didn't need him, and neither did he. His tail was curved near the ground, lashing. Jet was still unfazed. "You talk about your family as if you're living with them right now! It's your fault you abandoned them in the first place, and they abandoned you."

"**SHUT UP!**" He quickly shoved Jet down, pressing against his neck, his claws barely wounding his skin. The rogue fell underneath

Dusk'prowl's paws, surprised by his attack. "I'll make this death slow and painful if this is where it comes to!" The deputy yelled at his face, snarling. The cats were silent, they didn't say anything. "Dusk'prowl?" A voice erupted from the entrance. The large figure stood in front of the shining moon. His eyes were wide seeing his trusted deputy tackling another member.

The tom swiveled his head, he got off of Jet when seeing Storm'strike standing in front of everyone. He was tense, but calm. He appeared to be disappointed of him. He went inside of the underground cave, his eyes watchful of other rogues that only just stared. He approached the startled tom, whispering into his sharp ears. "Meet me out in the back." He ordered; his voice was left hoarse. He had a lot to say, and a lot of tasks to be given.

Dusk'prowl didn't waste no time, he had humiliated himself enough. He followed his leader to his den, leaving the others in shock. Jet was only left with a trace of blood on his neck. The deputy raced right behind Storm'strike. He ran in front of him, his eyes desperate for his approval after that situation. "Look, I'm sorry." He stops him. "I'm sorry for everything, I'm sorry for failing you, I'm sorry for-"

"Sorry for what?" Storm'strike raised his furry brow. "You haven't disappointed me. That cat was nothing but a mere clan cat. We have more important things to discuss. Just you and me."

The deputy stopped his worrisome ramblings. He could tell there was something up from the look of the leader's eyes. "What?" He asks, his leader passing by as he went into his dark den. "I'm giving you a task to be a spy." Storm'strike's eyes glances at the black tom. "I want you to seek the **Opal's Eye**. That I believe, sorts the past of a warrior's early life before their **destiny** had occurred." He sits down in his moss bed, his large tail grazing the side of Dusk'prowl's hip.

"You trust me?" Dusk'prowl asked, his body language seemed anxious of that idea. "It's a hard task, I don't know if I'll ever be up to complete."

The rogue leader tilts his head, he believed that his words were crazy talk. "You're responsible for all the ambushes we've made in

the past. Web'star was no match for us when we worked with the ginger. If you can do these tasks, then I'm willing to trust you on this." He narrowed at the tom; he had rough expectations on him. Dusk'prowl could feel his back aching of the weight that was put onto him. He wanted to decline, there was a feeling of worthlessness from his expression. Although the leader was never prone to show emotion, he had always felt some way to the tom.

"Look," He began. "As much as what the others had said, you'll do better than them. You're not ranked deputy for no reason. I believe that there is strength within you. You do know that this is what friends are for right?"

"Yeah." Dusk'prowl nodded. "I **guess** so."

"You won't be thinking about your family anytime soon." Storm'strike added, there was a sudden strain of depth to his voice, his paws wanting to keep him away from the past. "Jeffrey will be digging his own grave."

Dusk'prowl was quiet, he was listening to his demands carefully. His leader could tell he was changing back to his Prowler facade in seconds when given a task. He hummed proudly. "Go on." He urged. "Time's ticking."

The Prowler sets foot onto the cold ground, making his way out to the darkness. His fur blending into the shadows of night. There was a newfound feeling of hope, and determination. He was going to make Storm'strike proud. What was unexpected is a familiar presence standing out in the entrance of the underground cave. Storm'strike reaching to the main area as he sees a silhouette of someone who was part of the murder. He purred, recognizing her sweet scent of fruits.

"Ah... Cherry'fang."

Chapter **20**

He woke up to a dark space surrounding him. The warmth protected his body, but his mind was somewhere else in the emptiness of his own thoughts.

"Kid." A raspy voice appears, Peter's body materialized from darkness. His eyes appeared to be worried of something. "Kid! Wake up!"

Spider'paw opened his yellow eyes. His fur shot up, scrambling all over the place. "Where am I? Ghost'paw!?" His paws hit the ground; his pupils were trying to look for the group of cats that found him bleeding in the arms of Ghost'paw. He was also having a migraine from the constant ringing on his ears. The tears rushed from his sockets; he wept to the ghost as he thought it was the end of his young life. "Peter!?" He called to him, his limbs trembling. "What has happened to me?"

"You're not dead." Peter replies, the sun on his forehead illuminating the tom's striped, black fur. "This is your mind space. You can hear breathing, correct?" He asks. Spider'paw's ears suddenly moved, feeling his heart beating from the outside. The passing wind that went in and out. The tom nodded slowly, but he was still baffled. What had happened to him? His mind went black before feeling a pump of adrenaline into his veins, the voices of possession controlling his every move. Peter lowered his head, there were some things that he wanted to say, but he was finding hard to do so.

"I have a message that I wanted to give you. It's from an old friend of the night, who has been watching from time to time." He began. "You were the witness of my death, yes?"

"Have you not seen me?" Spider'paw remarked. "I was there, but I

never seen who had done it."

"You only ran away, that was enough evidence. Storm'strike is obviously responsible, but someone, someone from BlazeClan has something to do with it."

Spider'paw's eyes arched, he was confused. "What do you mean someone from BlazeClan?" The apprentice asked, Peter's grim expression stared at the small tom eye-to-eye. "I want you to beware the flames of your own blood, he'll burn **everything** in your way. Unless the prophecy speaks to him, you are in great danger." He moved close to him, his voice darkening. "No.." Spider'paw backed away, he shook his head in denial. "And where have you got this? I've made myself home in this place for the last few days, and now I'm in danger?" He clenched his teeth. "That's nothing but lies!

Peter felt the guilt run to his shoulders. "I don't know what has been going on, and that I should've been the one to guide you. You know you're part of the prophecy, right?"

The apprentice stopped. He was left speechless. "I'm part of the prophecy?" He responded, the tone of his voice quiet as a feather. "Me?" He expects an answer, his heart had skipped a beat from hearing that.

"Yes." The ghost answered.

Then, the small tom felt the wind moving intensely, the fabricated space fading into the color of white. "What's happening!?" He panicked, his fur shooting upward as the quick wind rushed through. Peter wasn't fazed, he was starting to fade away. "You're waking up." He answered. "**The sun will be calling to you, soon.**" He stood upright, his skin fading into tiny particles, leaving the tom. "WAIT!" Spider'paw yelled, reaching his paws over to the ghost as he fades away on sight.

The light took ahold of the tom, waking up into the dark medicine den, surrounded in cats that were similar to him. His body left numb, but he had large leaves and moss on his neck, and shoulders. The cold poultice left him vulnerable to the curious crowd of cats after he was rumored to have been taken down a dog. Onyx'paw

and Monty stood beside the unconscious tom at all times, until one of them had seen his nose wiggling. His eyes fluttering softly, his mind was still fresh.

"He's awake!" Onyx'paw yowled. The cats rushing in to meet with the passed-out tom. Ruby'paw, was overwhelmed with the young crowd of cats entering. "No! No!" The medicine-apprentice hissed. "This area is off limits!" She swiped her paws at others who were barging in. The apprentices, kits, they were surrounding him. The faces Spider'paw had seen, they were impressed. Even some of the young warriors who stood outside.

"I can see why my brother chose this 'softie'. He doesn't even act like one!" Orca'paw commented as he sat behind others. The other apprentices agreed with his words, but Poppy'paw found doubt as always. "The chosen tom wouldn't know what he's doing." She spoke. "I never believed his words during the gathering." She glared at him, there was some sort of hidden grief and denial behind her words of disagreement.

"Don't be a downer!" Koi'paw added. "I believe what he had said."

"But she isn't wrong." Sapphire'paw approached to the small group. "To take words from a random cat can be lies. You never know."

All those words mean little when he was regaining his consciousness. All he could hear were the chants of his name, beating a dog was big to them. They had never heard anything like this before, but it was only proven by Ghost'paw herself. Though, the attention was overwhelming. He was struggling to wake himself up, he couldn't get over the fact that he is part of the prophecy that just happened yesterday. There was bigger stuff to worry about than the fame that he was having. From the gathering to the saving of a SunClan apprentice.

Time is changing, and he has yet to decide.

But **destiny** will come no matter what. This will only be the beginning.

Chapter **21**

It's been **two moons.**

Things became suspiciously stagnant. Only peace ruled the territory, but dark secrets were taking their place, soon.

Rusty'claw was aware of Storm'strike's plans. His thoughts were progressively getting more conflicted after the stars fell before him. This was SunClan's way of answering his wishes. He had gotten Web'star killed for a reason. For his own gain of taking over and fulfilling his destiny of being Firestar's ancestor. He didn't know what to do now that his assignment that was given from his leader is to reconcile with his family. He didn't know how to show affection to them after a few moons of avoiding each other. Was his pride valuable than his own family? Or vice versa?

There is supposedly another gathering this sun-high, to explain what has happened over a few quarter-moons. He's been stirring all over his moss-bed every night. The fire begged him to do the right thing. From left to right he could hear his voices pleading for him. The sun blinds his face when he wakes up. He heard his other clanmates grooming themselves and sharing tongues as usual. The birds made their flight among the green fields of long grass. Burning'tail yowled at the top of her lungs.

"If you are old enough to run underneath the flames of the sun, gather for patrols!"

His green eyes glared at the deputy, with spite in his eyes. He wanted to say something with his usual smartness of his tone, showing his disobedience with the high ranks of the clan. But feeling that Sun'star was watching him, it made him reconsider his decision. He spotted his brother approaching to the crowd, the two cats were exchanging glares of sadness and hatred from one to the other. Rusty'claw haven't spoken to him, and Yellow'petal never forgave him.

"Ash'wind, Evening'shine, and Flint'stripe, you go on hunting patrol. Molten'throat will be your leader for the day." She ordered, the cats leaving as they followed their patrol leader. She then turns to the other group of cats, recognizing the two brothers, and one of them who had always despised her guts when the votes were settled in. Her eyes were stuck on Yellow'petal, she had an idea. "You." The small she-cat approaches him. "You lead the border patrol with Rusty'claw, Crimson'leaf, and Spark'drift."

Yellow'petal blinked, he glances at the other warriors who agreed with the deputy's orders. His brother on the other hand, was annoyed. Maybe this was just one of Sun'star's plans, but this wasn't going to be easy. The light ginger nodded in approval. "I'll do my best." He responded and took off as the others followed. *'I'll do my best'... what a lie.*

As he went, the group were slowly splitting up. It was only him and his brother roaming the clearing as the sun burned their backs. No words were exchanged, only annoyed grunts on both sides. There was pain in their faces, this exact moment juxtaposing their old days of sibling banter and being young dumb kits despite what their father had done. Even if all of that was in the past, it was enough to ruin their relationship now that Rusty'claw shows no care to the family. His only father that he knew specifically, was the spirit of Firestar.

They stop at a ledge, the wind moving their fur at the opposite way. "So.." Rusty'claw began. "What do you want to boss me around over?" He sneered, in an obvious joking matter. It was something Yellow'petal used to be fond over. But he wasn't impressed, he only gave blunt responses, showing his uninterest. "You take the east side of the territory, while I go further South." He stares at the great watering hole, with the stream connecting to the gathering lake.

"...Upset?" He asks, confused of his brother's dry behavior. "You're always the nicer brother, what happened?"

"Nothing happened." Yellow'petal retorted coldly. "I'm simply giving you directions." he stepped in front of him, focusing on what's in front of him. His tail lashing repeatedly. "You sound gruff, as if someone had made dirt in your nest." He grew snarky as he kept

throwing lots of questions at him. "Is that old skunk bothering you? Have you finally believed what I've been saying?" He presses him, his tone became condescending. "I believe nothing from those words you've made about **my** own mother." Yellow'petal fired back at him, his claws irritably digging the ground. "This is a border patrol, not the time to sneer and bicker.

"Pfshh-..." Rusty'claw scoffs. "You're afraid, I get it. But she won't be alive forever. You'll be powerless without a voice of reason. You'll never find a purpose in life without me."

"And I'll be glad." Yellow'petal slowly turns around, glowering at his brother. His lack of emotion to his words were aggravating the ginger tom. "Either you do what I ask, and we'll have no problems. I promise you. But remember this, you have a choice to turn yourself around, or you'll **never** speak to me, or my mother again."

"But you've said that already!" Rusty'claw whined. "The least I can do is actually speak to you, for once."

"Actions speak louder than words." Yellow'petal roamed closely to him, his paws firmly stepped on the ground. He led out a low growl. "You haven't done anything to improve yourself, just to care for a hopeless dream? That prophecy can say whatever it wants to say, but I want my brother back. You're nowhere near what **he** is. You never were." His voice was filled with venom, it was all of those bottle-up thoughts that he wanted to say to him. It left Rusty'claw in silence.

Satisfied with the silence he finally received out of his 'brother'. He runs off to the watering hole, leaving him alone to battle his own demons. The ginger tom couldn't get his voice out of his head, he couldn't believe that this is what he has been feeling after a long moon of avoiding him. He was anything above the old Rusty'claw.. or what his kinder side was last seen as Rusty'paw. How dare he had said those things after he was the one who helped taking care of their sick mother? *He's treating me like father again, he's abandoned me once more!*

But that other side of him, that other side where his heart had fell apart from the words that he wished were taken back as jokes from

their younger days. He knew he was at fault, but he was in fact, blinded to see it. Was it Firestar corrupting his mind? Or was it something more? It was hard to find the blame of his failed relationships when its reality, it was just him, and the influence that corrupted his mind. The lightning that strikes down everything that his mother had given in silver claws, only to reject in selfishness, and ego. And that's when he knew.

He spots a blue-eyed, black and slender tom speeding through the forests of TerraClan.

The Prowler has made foot into SunClan's soil.

Instead of doing patrol, he follows the black cat instead.

Chapter **22**

It was a fresh breath of air to be back at the territory again after his mission had to remain stagnant after he got sick, and their territory suffered from lack of prey for a torturous two moons.

He could reminisce the time he had met the stalking crow, only for him to disappear that one night.

What he remembered, was the tom jumping off of that cliff. The words of resentment towards the sunset, and how much he had wanted to protect himself and future generations from the law of **destiny**, only to spread misfortune to all. Even his own closest blood to suffer from his paid debt to the cycle he had created. The Prowler had to forget about it, it wasn't his business. He was just there to help, though there was some regret with it.

He had to be careful, since all of the apprentices were going to the training cave as always, but it was easier access into clan camps through their dens. The only problem is that he has **no** clue where the **Opal's Eye** is. It could be in BreezeClan, TerraClan, or BlazeClan. But what he didn't think was WaveClan's association with gemstones. It caught his idea the moment he stared at TerraClan's camp, standing on the ledge. A large, gnarly tree stood on the edge as the long vines of hundreds hung all over the camp. The flowers that were spread all over the camp had caused his nose to stuff with irritation. "These flower-loving kitties..." He sneered.

Seeing that their camp wasn't the culprit of what they were looking for, he runs off. Only leaving a trace of his shadow catching the attention of roaming kits who saw him. He had to be careful now that the territory is lively during the day, especially for days of the gathering. He saw that many patrols were out, as the clans began to ramp up their security. They had found the body of Hare'paw in the medicine den of BreezeClan, leaving both clans in disarray.

His quiet paws crept under the shade of those large trees. His ears

were shot up as he spotted a group of cats, and one of them is who he had recognized. The one that outsmarted him. The black cat's body was turned around, as he spoke to the Bengal, and a long-muzzled tom. He growled, his muscles tightening from the sight of him. He was going to make him pay for turning his name into a joke. He was this close to pouncing at him and finishing him off.

But then he heard their words, as they sat under the sunlight. The brown long-muzzled tom was in the middle of sun-bathing as he listened carefully.

"**I feel that there is something after me. Whether is the rogues, Rusty'claw, or SunClan themselves.**"

"**Is that why you haven't been training like you used to?**" The Bengal tom asks. "**You're just in about a few quarter-moons in before you'll become a young warrior. You have a lot to learn.**"

"**He's paranoid, that's what.**" The long-muzzled tom murmured. "**Clans expect too much for him. He's a new recruit; he should at least have another moon of training. To belong in the wild is to require much power of your physical and mental.**"

"**You think I need another moon?**" The black tom glances at the long-muzzled cat. "**It's been so long that Emerald'glare has been distracted with his deputy work, lately.**"

"Maybe..." The Bengal tom looks at the sky before facing at the black tom, where he silently notices the blue eyes peering from the bushy leaves. "**You could go along with Emerald'glare's patrols and other things? You can always ask, but it won't be guaranteed...**"

It wasn't a bad idea, maybe he could get some knowledge in being deputy for the later future. "**Maybe.**" He replied.

However, a peculiar cold wind that shot through his back, whispered in both ears, warned him about a blue-eyed foe. "*Beware the tom that seems to prowl under the sun*." The voice of piercing ice made his fur touch the skies. The apprentice turned around with quickness, to see the same tom staring at him. But what was more

shocking, is the yellow eyes that shone before the rogue.

Dusk'prowl's eyes were shot open, repeatedly shaking his head in denial. He caught himself backing away from the bush, the memories of a stormy day as he walks away in front of his own blood who looked up to him. Those eyes of purity and innocence haunting him as the voice of **Scourge** berated him for turning his family away. His unsheathed claws poked holes onto the dirt, the memories hitting him in every way, the screech of a violin that pained his soul as the guilt ached his body. He was petrified; he couldn't do anything like he planned. He was just some black cat, why could he be afraid of his yellow eyes?

Those memories went the same for Spider'paw. His eyes were left blank, were those the blue eyes of an **uncle** that left him and his family? Was he the tom that left him as he cried for him? He could feel the tears of rage on his eyes falling as he watched him run, there were growing concerns for both of the cats as they saw the blue-eyed tom for the first time. The rogue quickly retreated, his long tail constantly hitting the ground. The wind took him to the farthest place away from what he had just saw. His paws hitting the ground, causing unwanted attention from neighboring patrols.

The environment around him changed as he went deeper into the forest. The clouds rushing in, the storms rumbling above. All he saw was gray and black, from the dead trees to dead crows falling from the skies. He passed through a large spider web that got stuck into the fur. It wouldn't leave him when he sped through the dark meadows. A large figure of cats saw him, their eyes mimicking the color of what his nephew had. The voices of his mind taunting him, he could hear Storm'strike scolding him from running away.

"You stupid coward! What are you doing!?"

"Have you known that all of this is completely your fault?"

"You're leaving us!?"

"Is this how you're repaying me after I protected you for so long?"

"Look at me while I'm talking to you! LOOK AT ME!"

A cat ran behind him, calling his name repeatedly. Dusk'prowl snapped as he drifted his paws from the dirt and tackled him. **"WHAT!?"** He yells at him, not knowing who it was.

"DUSK'PROWL! IT'S ME!"

The voice of a similar ginger tom made him stop what he was doing. His claws were holding Rusty'claw's throat, ready to tear. He could feel the reality coming back, as the skies changed back, and the leaves of the tree were bushy, and vibrant under the yellow light. He was breathing like an exhausted engine of a monster. His claws pierced the ginger tom's shoulders, his body trembling, as he moved himself off. "Forgive me... please forgive me." His voice appeared to be labored from the running.

"What is wrong with you? What were you running from?" Rusty'claw moved away, he was annoyed that Dusk'prowl didn't even recognize him at first. 'And what have you been doing? I thought you've already found the **Opal's Eye**." He chides him, his eyes showing great disappointment to the claimed 'Prowler' of the forest. Dusk'prowl looks away, he has been neglecting his job for quite a while, but that was on Storm'strike and the rogue group. "We were suffering from lack of prey, and I had a cough."

"Hmph." Rusty'claw's pupils moved up and down, as if he was silently judging. "Well, if you're looking for the **Opal's Eye**. It's in WaveClan's tunnels."

The ginger tom drags himself from the ground, stretching his body. Dusk'prowl was rather surprised, he knew that it was somewhere near the gemstone caves. "Is... is that all?" He asks, noticing the looks of stress on his face. "You look...-"

"Don't ask." Rusty'claw bickered, turning his back on him. "You're here for a reason, but I won't be working for your leader no longer."

"Wait-" The rogue ran up to him again, but Rusty'claw had already scurried off. What he only saw was the leaves falling above him. He

looks down at the shadows of leaves from the trees, a blue-eyed feline with a torn, purple collar formed below him. Scourge was watching him, never letting the memory go, as Dusk'prowl was the sole reason for the cause. And that he was one of the problems that Spider'paw grew up with later in life.

But the poor apprentice didn't know that there were many than just one. A debt that he has to pay in the later future.

The Prowler runs off to the opposite side, putting on his facade as the leader's trusted warrior, ready to achieve the Storm's long-awaited mission.

Chapter **23**

"I saw someone."

Spider'paw sat in front of Emerald'glare as they sat on a hill, watching the gathering take place far away. He had grown quite a bit, with more experience in combat. But since there was a lack of training due to the deputy taking over Otter'star's duties, he's been alone with his thoughts. He has friends such as Onyx'paw, Monty, and Ghost'paw, but it wasn't enough. As the clans thought that Rusty'claw is the cat that SunClan has spoken of, they never knew it was someone who they expected the least. But there was only one question, why him?

"Did you run to a rogue earlier?" Emerald'glare's expression had a look of curiosity. There was also a slight bit of worry. With Hare'paw's body being found in another camp, there was going to be something stirring between two known clans, and that the rogues may be up to something. Spider'paw nodded slowly, his eyes focusing to the leaders speaking at one another. "They looked too similar." His voice trembled, feeling mixed emotions that weren't as nice as he used to be when he first came here. "Like-..." He paused; the tom wasn't this open when speaking about his family. He tried mustering up to strength to bring up that word he hated. "My uncle."

"You had an uncle?" The deputy asks. He had been curious about Spider'paw's home life, that often makes him reason with why he chose to stay in the forest. "Yeah, but I don't get to talk about him around my... elder." He says, still refusing to use 'father'. "The two didn't have a good relationship. He left our family when I was three moons." His voice was quieter when speaking about this. The memories rushed to him like a flood, he was endlessly drowning as the weight of the past dragged him down further.

"I'm sorry about that." Emerald'glare turns his head to the side, his nose touching the apprentice's head as a comforting gesture. "I can

see that you had a rough upbringing." The deputy examines him, seeing the scars on his body, and the ones that were from the past. "Do I?" Spider'paw stares at the sparkling lake waters. "I don't... have a really bad upbringing. I mean-... I have my mother and Lee." He spoke. "It's not that bad."

"But your father..." The deputy looks out to the sun, his eyes concerned for him. "The way you speak of him, he sounds like he has extreme paranoia."

"No, he's controlling, and that's what he is, that's what he's always going to be." Spider'paw responded in a gravelly way, he became careless for his father's life. "He poisoned me." He states this with boldness, now having the power to say these things without walking around in rigid rocks. Emerald'glare's muzzle tugged a frown, his eyes revealing his disappointment. "And you respond it like that?" He asks. "You know you can't live on with hatred forever."

"Why do you say that?" Spider'paw snapped his head. "I've been around him for too long. I've been depending on him that I never knew what I wanted to do with my life until I came here. Now that he kicked me out, I have nothing to **offer** for him." He lowers his head, finding no hope for the past. "As much as the amount of damage he did to you..." Emerald'glare stood up as he walked in front of the apprentice, the sun glistening on his black fur. "You should remember that holding this anger for him, it isn't worth it. He may have been affected from the past that he poured all of those memories onto you."

Spider'paw could feel the anger drifting away, as he became more merciful. He wasn't the type to wish horrible things to a loved one who had hurt him in the past. He was finding trouble to live freely like he wanted, he was just a prison for all of his issues. He raises his head to stare at his mentor directly. "How can I just... let go?" He questions. "I can't forgive easily."

"Although, I won't be justifying his actions." Emerald'glare moves to sit down, and stare at the sky with his apprentice. "Maybe you could try and make amends with him? If it isn't possible for him to change, then there's that. You can't tell a crow to behave like a

dove."

His words ingrained to his mind, he knew this could be difficult now that his own father couldn't accept him anymore. But deep in his heart, he wanted a closure. It was going to be more complex than just a simple sorry.

As the two sat in silence, Spider'paw notices that the gathering was concluding, he overhears an argument between both leaders that took his attention away from the conversation. It was a verbal battle between Cedar'star and Gale'star, it was turning intense from every second an insult slips out. "These mouse-brains." Emerald'glare shook his head. "I know none of the clans were responsible for that." His voice was left in aggravation for their continuous bickering.

"I know, I can sense some tension forming. They're idiotic." There was a little of his humor in voice.

But he can't be too comfortable, there's a storm rumbling in the distance of the waves. With one strike could make everything around him, crumble to the ground like falling rocks from a cave.

The reddening eyes above the mid-sun will be waiting for him. **Soon.**

Chapter **24**

In the middle of the night, the clans were now resting in their dens after a disaster of a gathering. The Prowler sets foot into the tunnels, contemplating where he should go. He had some of the rogues with him. They all split up as they snuck inside through the shared tunnels of BlazeClan.

The winds were quiet, the long grass rustled near the beach, but the moon was watching. She felt troubled of their presence, her stars twinkling above the clans as a signal. Her voice came off as whispers of the wind. Spider'paw, who hadn't got any sleep, sat there staring emotionlessly at the rocky walls. This was the time when he truly wished Ghost'paw was there, but he understood how important her job was to her. He had to focus on his own thoughts to respect her wishes.

But he couldn't bear to stay still, why was his uncle there? Why did he decide to come back to his life after all these seasons? He grew up without him, stood up to his father without him on his side, and he was left to achieve a purpose in life without his support. To see him again, disheveled and fur riddled with scars. Either he wanted to be angry, frightened, or sorrowful. He turns his head to see the ghost standing in the dark. **Scourge's** blue eyes were mostly cold, emotionless, and never broke a moment of his silence. He never spoke to him but only stood by his side to protect him.

His pupils gestured towards the tunnel behind Otter'star's den, the tunnel to the **Opal's Eye.** Spider'paw looks at the ghost and then at the cave. The crystals usually dim past midnight, so it was dark and empty. The black tom snuck out of the den, his quiet steps moving into the shadows. He was hoping no other warrior could see him awake. That one elder has been on his tail for a good while. The ghost followed him to the tunnel, the darkness veiling the area as the glow from the pond below the cliff remained at the very end. Spider'paw could remember vividly of that time Emerald'glare introduced him to the law of destiny.

It raised questions that are yet to be answered. It made his wonder when destiny would answer to him. Maybe it had already done that by the presence of his uncle, and that attack during the barn. Those voices were still running deep in his mind, the feeling of rage over his friend, and the dog that tried to ravage her. He stopped near the end of the tunnel as the light barely broke through. The BloodClan ghost appeared in front of him. He was sensing danger ahead of the cliff.

Spider'paw never really exchanged any conversation with the wandering spirit. But he could tell there was some agitation from the look of his slit eyes. "Do you hear something?" He whispered; Scourge gestured his muzzle towards the cliff. Spider'paw's body picked up some vibration deep within the bottom tunnels. His fur pointed upwards; his nose tracked a familiar metallic scent... the scent of blood, his own blood.

Dusk'prowl roamed the tunnels until seeing a speck of light ahead. The other rogues were left irritated. "Why would you wake us up in the middle of the night?" Inky's high-pitched voice filled in the silence, only responded by a harsh 'hush!' coming from Moonie. "What?" She whined. "I'm tired!" She stomped on the ground. A hint of annoyance came from the black and white she-cat. "We're rogues! We are never tired!" Moonie snapped, her fangs baring at the small she-cat. "Either you help, or we won't be able to eat tomorrow night!"

"Quiet!" Dusk'prowl crept behind the rock. He could hear the colorful pond calling his name. The voices of hope and forever fame will lead him in the path of power and control. Something that he's been craving for a long time. "You two go in different tunnels and look out for me." He commanded, his body crouching behind the rock as he crept forward. "Go!"

"Fine!" Inky hissed, getting ready to scram, but she added one more word. Her voice gave the appearance of a sharp claw grazing the concrete and creating a number of screeches. "But if we end up getting caught, it's your fault! I'll tell Father about you!"

"Boo-hoo." Moonie jeered, running off to the opposite direction. The two rogues left Dusk'prowl to deal with himself. He snuck up to the

cave, his eyes squinting from the intense light. The small glowing pebbles were gathered in aligned groups, circling the pond as swirling streaks of a galaxy. Dusk'prowl focused on the eye of the pond. White, luminous, it powered the multicolored crystals that stood near the pond. The small pebbles near the outskirts were connected like constellations. Like a large spider web.

"Perfect..." Dusk'prowl approached the pond slowly. His eyes locked on the details, and the pond was rumored to have some magic involved in the law of **destiny**. In that light is where he foresaw something beneath that light. The past that haunted him, a voice that cause him to back down.

"*Blood of death sets foot from his web, his patience thin as a silky line. You will pay for leaving your nest behind*."

Dusk'prowl felt his heart stop in an instant. The ringing noise returned, and the feeling of spiders crawling on his fur. The calls of a crow are heard before him. Death signaled his presence in the shape of his son. His head snapped at Spider's paw, leaping from the cliff. The rogue's eyes expanded, and he rolled over as the small tom made an attempt to tackle him. "You!" The rogue cried. "Don't you go near!" His heart pounded the walls of his chest, causing pain. His claws sank on the dirt ground, the tears rushing from his eyes. All he could hear was his heart crying for him, but his body craving for a rush of intense movement to fulfill his need of victory.

Spider'paw fell onto the ground, his hips mildly injured. "You-!" He choked; his strong back legs ready to pounce at the tom. "I knew it! I knew you were going to be here!" He exclaimed. Dusk'prowl's labored breathing kept him from speaking any further. His vision was foggy. He wanted to cry to the suns and **destiny** for bringing him here. He was forgetting what he was there for. "Why..." He breathed. "Why are you here?"

"You're in WaveClan territory!" Cried Spider'paw, dragging his paws over the stone floor as he got up. His eyes seething in anger. "Why are **YOU** here!?"

"You don't understand." His fangs clenched together; his claws scraped the floor. He was half the size of the apprentice, his shadow

covering his nephew whole. He was angry for many reasons, but he couldn't bring himself to hurt him. "I'm here to fulfill my mission. You should've stayed with your father." His voice bitter and venomous. But his eyes were swollen, the dangerous glare he had always given to his unfortunate victims, turned into mercy.

"What?" Spider'paw moved closer, his tail lashing and hitting the rock on his right side. "What are you talking about?"

Dusk'prowl went silent, it was so silent that a feather can be heard dropping towards the bottom. "He didn't tell you." He stated, his voice caught in a whisper. He was speechless. "He... **never** told you about the past, and his upbringing." He took a step forward, his body limping. Spider'paw couldn't believe that his thoughts were true all along. **Scourge** knew that his uncle was going to be there at the exact time. The poor apprentice couldn't handle the grief and anger he was forced to hold.

"What about when you left us? Yeah? What about when you yelled me, saying that you didn't want me anymore?" The small tom began to press him, his voice trembling as he was about to break again. Dusk'prowl couldn't help but stare. "You know I never wanted to tell you. It's between me and your father. You were young to know our business." He denied harshly, turning away from him. "I didn't want to poison your mind. It was best to just leave it as it is."

"No, no." Spider'paw's voice lowered to an unsettling whisper. The tears falling from his eyes. "It wasn't you and Jeffrey's business when you pushed me away. It wasn't **your** business when you kept me crying for you-"

"I had to do what was right!" The rogue cuts him off. "I had to leave because of your father. You should've been angry at him when he drove him away." He was still looking at the painted walls of ancient carvings. He was lying, and Spider'paw could see it in his own eyes. "You're not being honest." He growled lowly. "It was still **your** choice. You took the coward's way out. You're not even **looking** at me." He added, approaching the tom slowly. He could feel a rise of energy and adrenaline. His small muscles tensing under his slender body. The color green spread through his pupils. **Scourge** is getting irritated.

"You don't understand **my** pain. Your father had done this to us. He probably kicked you out, didn't he? I know how you feel. Believe me." Dusk'prowl 's voice was trying to bring a second chance out of his nephew, he was desperate. He couldn't just live and suffer without his forgiveness. But it wasn't that easy than he thought. "No, you don't!" He hissed. "You don't know how I've felt and yet you seek forgiveness in me when you haven't apologized!? It's not that I needed you anyway, I have friends, I have a clan, and I have the life that I've achieved without you! You wanted me to chase those dreams of freedom and even promised that you'll stay by my side until the end!"

"I'm here." Dusk'prowl stayed calm, he could tell his nephew was ready to breakdown in front of him. He couldn't help but to look away as to avoid his past problems. "I'm already here, what more do you want from me? We can finally be a perfect happy family-"

Spider'paw's head twitched, he felt the anger of his ancestor taking control of him. He yelled, stuck in the voice of his possessor. His raspy, deep voice turning into a yowl of desperation, the exact opposite of his soft-toned, up-beat voice. His eyes turning fully green a split second.

"LOOK AT ME!" His voice echoed.

Dusk'prowl stopped, jolting his head. He was left in surprise, his heart skipping a beat. He was petrified of that voice, the voice who taunted him and shamed for abandoning his blood when they needed him. Blood meant everything, not just to beg for forgiveness and hoping all those bad memories will waste away, Dusk'prowl had broken his nephew's trust. He was lucky that his ancestor wouldn't make the apprentice violently ravage him with no limits, that's when **blood** will truly matter.

Spider'paw trembled uncontrollably, his eyes went back to yellow. He couldn't believe what he had done. The tears burned his muzzle, dripping onto the ground. His eyes glaring directly at his uncle. The two was now left in silence. "I'm..." Dusk'prowl felt troubled to say a word. He couldn't run anymore. The webs were bound to catch him. The tears were instantly falling, he broke out sobbing. The guilt was too much, he couldn't take it anymore. It was the first time that the

apprentice had saw his uncle collapse in front of him. He was now just the vulnerable Softpaw instead of the infamous Prowler.

"I'm-" The apprentice froze up, he never meant to see his uncle cry in front of him. He ran for his aid, wanting to comfort him. "Look, I'm sorry-... please I'm sorry-..." He crouched in front of the rogue; he nudged his head at his paws. Dusk'prowl clung onto the ground, building his courage. "I failed you." The tom admitted as he wept. "And I've shouldn't do that to you. You don't deserve it, none of this was your fault."

"What are you talking about?" Spider'paw wept, rubbing his forehead against his. He purred, trying to comfort his uncle. "I didn't want to yell at you- I-..."

The two rogues from earlier saw the two crying at each other, Moonie gasped from instant shock. "Dusk'prowl!?" She yelled. "What are you doing!?" He approached the two, her claws unsheathing. Dusk'prowl felt his body freeze, but he turned around to see that the she-cats were finally back. He wasn't on a rush; his nephew was scared for his life, so he stood right in front of him. His eyes scattered with tears. "Nothing."

"You're a traitor!" Inky called, recognizing the tom from the barn. "No rogue should be related with the clan rats!" She bared her teeth. Moonie shook her head in disappointment. "You're seriously related to him? He couldn't even carry a fish without his small legs stumbling over!" She yowled, poking at Spider'paw's height. Dusk'prowl's eyes darkened in the mention of Spider'paw's height. "He isn't just a clan cat. That is my **nephew**." He revealed his fangs, his body vibrating from his growling. His claws grazed the ground. "He'll be a better warrior than what you are."

"Enough talking!" Moonie ordered. "Either you handle him, or I'll tell Storm'strike." The she-cat threatened, Inky moved behind. Her eyes creeping at the small apprentice. He was her prey. Spider'paw expressed a look of worry as he clung onto his uncle, it had given the rogue a reminder of someone different to Spider'paw, a little flower under the sun that clung onto the vines of its loved one. The innocence in his eyes were still there, no matter how much he looked. **Sunflower** was still there.

"I won't be handling anything." The rogue snarled. "The only handling I will do to you will be anything but nice. That is a promise."

"NO!" Moonie screamed, running across the cave and lunging at the deputy, tackling him down. Dusk'prowl dodged, moving towards her left as he head-butted her hip. Spider'paw jumped out of the way, Inky pounced at him. Her claws clinging onto his shoulder. The small tom yowled, kicking her lower stomach. "Leave him alone! He didn't do anything!" He shouted, a small hint of green appeared in his pupils. "Don't touch him!"

"Shut up!" Inky roared. "He'll be next after I'm done with you!"

She leapt at the apprentice again, her arms stretching at his torso. Her ears heard the tussling between the Dusk'prowl and Moonie.

"Let me help you." The voice of the BloodClan ghost called to him. *"They'll pay with their lives."*

In a drop of a pebble, a green streak emitted from Spider'paw's body as he unsheathed his claws and ran at Inky. His claws marked her neck, blood splattering everywhere. A pained yowl is heard behind Moonie, she had Dusk'prowl pinned onto the ground. She swiveled her body, and what she saw was a terrifying image of the bleeding she-cat. Inky had a large scar on her neck, causing her to tumble downward, the wounds were very deep. The color of red marked the crystals, and surrounding rocks. All of the commotion caused lots of concern above the cliff as many cats began to wake up.

"NO!" Moonie yelped, running towards the tom in anger. "YOU KILLED HER! YOU MONSTER!"

Spider'paw sat on his haunches, his body twitching from the force of his possessor. His eyes widening from what he had done. His paws and fur were stained in crimson. The apprentice had claimed his first kill. The terrified Dusk'prowl saw shadows of cats running down to the tunnel. He screams at her. "MOONIE! GET BACK!" He commanded. Moonie refused, gripping onto the body of Inky by her scruff. She was choking on her own blood, her body twitching as she still fought for life. "NO! INKY NO!" Moonie cried, running

towards the tunnels to where the exit was located. Dusk'prowl was ready to flee from the scene.

He glances at his nephew one last time. "Run." He urged. "Don't say anything. I'll take this from here."

Spider'paw's body was left petrified, he could feel his body weakening. His body turning foggy. But what he couldn't forget was his uncle's voice, and how he had stood up for him.

The terrified rogues tracked speckles of blood until they got close to the sandy tunnels, where they escaped to the beach. Moonie held Inky on her jaw; she wasn't going to let them catch her. The anger had fueled her hatred for clan cats, and maybe even Dusk'prowl.

As the two found their way out, he snaps at her. His tone strained, and spiteful. His paws stomped on the sand, as he towered in front of her. "**If you ever tell him about my nephew, I'll kill you.**" He threatened. His blue eyes focusing on the she-cat in front of him, his heart still beating from the events that occurred moments ago. Moonie, with tears on her eyes, turned her back on him. "You wouldn't... not after we lost a clan member." The rogue moved close to her, hissing. "Don't make it hard to deal with such task. I'll let you live another day if you keep your maw shut and never speak of this again.

Moonie fell into silence; he had fully convinced her. She quickly ran off with the lightly weighed body of Inky.

The only thing Dusk'prowl could do is watch the waves in front of him. The voices of his nephew still running freshly in his mind. That single night changed everything forever.

He was done making excuses and running away from his problems. He was going to be present to his life, no matter if the clans disapprove of his trespassing. He wasn't going to fail him. He'll make things right.

And that will be a promise.

Chapter **25**

"So, what happened?"

The so-called 'leader' spoke to the tom in a voice that made a difference to his lazy and defiant attitude. His eyes baggy from the lack of sleep, but his sharp pupils were weary of a horrible reminder standing in front of him.

"I said nothing happened." Spider'paw grumbled. "How many times do I have to say this?"

"How many times will I pressure you to tell the truth?" Otter'star remarked in a stern tone. "You've caused a ruckus near a sacred landmark with the rogues, have you not?" He stood close to the apprentice, cornering him. An elder, Tidal'gleam stood by his side, she has been watching the tom for quite a bit. "In my eyes, I believe a violent spirit is running amuck." She murmured to Oleander'cloud. But the medicine cat didn't believe that he knew there was something more to the small tom. A memory that supposedly hidden under the dirt of the dead.

"You're caring about your clan just now?" He jerked his head close to the leader, his stubbornness creating a hard shell that made him agitated and untrustful. Otter'star went silent, the burning image of the crow showing his refusal to leave his mind. An old friend that is ingrained to the apprentice, the distant relationship of the two toms due to him befriending a she-cat called his daughter. The leader snarled, his body shoving Spider'paw aggressively. "This isn't about me! It's about you!"

Spider'paw jumped backwards, his eyes widening as the voice of his leader increased in volume. The air rushing in and out of his nostrils, his eyes watering from the tension of the environment. The rain crashing and flooding the lands around him, **his own family turning back on him.** Oleander'cloud quickly moved in front of his brother. "No!" He hissed, his claws unsheathing. "You must understand that this is still a youngling! You do not push him

around as some sort of plaything!" He chided, even going as far as to bat his paws onto his face.

"He could be a traitor!" Otter'star argued. "He could leave us in the ditch, and we'll lose another until our clan falls!"

"You cannot interfere." Oleander'cloud whispered, his voice cold than the winds of BreezeClan. "I don't trust that you'll have total control over his **destiny**."

The voices were all slurred in his mind, Spider'paw was stuck onto the wall. His body vibrating from the number of warriors observing the meeting that's supposedly 'private'. He was fearful of what they could do if they found out about his uncle. He didn't want to lose what he longed for. Otter'star, feeling defeated of his straightforward tactics, he stepped away, his brother taking on the lead. "Spider'paw." His voice gentle as the silent waves outside of the beach, but stern as the surrounding stormy clouds that his father has sent. "Listen and listen to me carefully. as you may suspected, the prophecy is about you... and Rusty'claw."

Spider'paw, who was still breathing heavily, heard the medicine cat's voice. He closed his eyes for a brief moment, going back to reality of the situation. "That, I knew..." He spoke cautiously quiet. "I don't trust him. I never will." He shook his head, just from the thought of that ginger tom made him cringe. Oleander'cloud had expected this behavior coming from the tom. "It is beneficial that you two needed to make up somehow. The prophecy says that you two are destined to defeat Storm'strike. But you two should accompany each other. **Those darkest times will burn everything what SunClan worked for to the ground if left neglected.**"

The den went quiet. Spider'paw still felt resistant of that idea. He pondered that moment of the fallen stars. The SunClan spirits calling for two of the cats that were willing to save the territory from downfall. With all of the friends and companions he made along the way, he was willing to help. He had no choice but to do so. He may have a feeling there was something that Rusty'claw was afraid to admit. "I... could try and do that. But I can't expect for him to listen."

Oleander'cloud nodded understandingly. He was aware of the stubbornness Rusty'claw was known for. "I don't expect a quick change."

The brother turns his head to Otter'star. The leader's eyes bursting in wrathful flames. The memory burning his vision that created a thick boundary between him and the apprentice. His eyes almost **mimicking the glare of scarlet eyes** that stalked the small tom ever since he stepped his paws onto SunClan soil. He then closed his eyes, seething in his own anger of betrayal and grief hidden under the facade. It made Spider'paw wonder why the WaveClan members loved him but hated his presence as it sparks up memories of one former deputy that battled with the Storm long ago.

"You're dismissed." Otter'star's deep voice mumbled under his maw.

The apprentice didn't waste no time to run off into the stormy morning skies above the crystallized cave.

Meanwhile....

He sat close to the beach, where Monty and Onyx'foot was seen. Ghost'paw was also present, her eyes lightened up as she saw the WaveClan apprentice leaving the cave. She did overhear the two cat's conversating with each other. "As I always say, she'll only go for the charms, instead of the treats." Monty purred; he was in the middle of handling Onyx'foot's crush from another clan. He jokingly bumped arms with the Bengal tom, Onyx'foot looked away in embarrassment. "She's so... out of my league..."

Spider'paw's eyes softened from the sight of Ghost'paw, although he heard of Monty's words which almost nearly made him choke. The SunClan apprentice stared, puzzled of Spider'paw's flustered look. "Are you alright? Did anything happen in there? I know my father is-..."

"Oh! It was fine." The apprentice tom immediately cut her off, easing her anxiety. His soft-toned voice was like a whisper from the wind. "You don't have to worry, I don't have any new scars." He nudged his head at her shoulder playfully. He was hiding the fact that it had something to do with Rusty'claw, but he figured that she

knew.

Ghost'paw felt her body being nudged backwards from the tom's movement. She didn't want to pressure him knowingly that the meeting was personal to him and Otter'star. Out of response, she head-butted his hips as she fled to the clearing in front of the beach. It was enough of the prophecy talk for today. The butterflies moving from her graceful movement, the wind picking up her speed. "Come on!" She called.

Spider'paw watched as the apprentice ran off, he trails behind her.

Despite what had happened in the past, he knew now that he will have to move on. It wasn't easy, knowing that he had faced his worst memories, and seeing his uncle again. That was still something that he struggled to speak of and showed refusal. Now, he was going to face the tom that hated his guts. The taste of sourness stinging his tongue just from whispering Rusty'claw's name. It was something big to deal with, and that the territory is counting on him to deal with the warrior himself.

The Storm will have to wait, there were bigger storms to come, and for what the apprentice will have to handle.

Chapter **26**

The ginger tom never came back to camp.

He sat on that cliff where his brother spoke to him and left him to deal his trauma on his own. Rusty'claw refused to eat, drink, or even come back by the BlazeClan's message of worry.

He always wanted to be like Firestar, that's just how he was born with. That's what he truly believed in. When in reality, he was breaking a family in variables. All he could do was to stare endlessly at the watering hole until death finds its place. He has been sitting on that exact spot since yesterday after meeting Dusk'prowl, he wasn't planning on leaving anytime soon. Yellow'petal could care less now that he had already gave up on him two moons prior.

But what he didn't notice, was a tom standing behind him. In the corner of his eye, he made a low growl when seeing that apprentice who got in the way of his life, sitting on his left. He continued to scratch the dirt, his tail jittery from the paranoia. His eyes were bloodshot red from the lack of sleep, the fatigue causing his body to ache after staying in the same spot for too long. "Why are you here?" He responded aggressively, his orange and mattered fur mimicked the flames that erupted from his actions.

"...I-..." Spider'paw hesitated, his pupils wandering off to the ground, avoiding the glares of his foe. His front paws fidgeting out of nervousness. "I wanted to speak with you."

Rusty'claw's eyes narrowed in suspicion. "I don't trust you." He said, his head hanging below the setting light of the sun. His eyes darkening underneath the obvious flames he was feeling on the inside. His voice ruthless and agitated of the tom's presence. "Are you trying to ruin me?" He assumed, becoming more fearful as Spider'paw carefully approached him. "You're taking my life away

as we speak." He breathed, desperate for an answer to his torture. "What?" The apprentice stared with confusion. "What have I done?"

The warrior could feel his heart pumping louder, his eyes growing bigger. It appeared to Spider'paw that the warrior about to explode on him. "What have you **done** to me?" His raucous voice quivered; he was keeping himself from showing vulnerability. The waves of tears were blinding his rage, the feeling of grief knowing that he had failed completely everything. "You have the life that I truly want. The life that I've worked hard for, even **killed** to get what I wanted. And they just hand all the good things to you?"

Spider'paw didn't try and quarrel with him, his eyes only wandered to the sun. He was struggling to find his words and what he could say. His eyes narrowing from what he hinted on. "Not all good things happened to me." Says the tom. "Life isn't going to give you the things you desire-"

"But they've given everything I desired to **YOU!**" He snapped, standing on his four legs as he approached the tom in quick speed. His shadow consumed the black tom whole, he was just **this** close in killing him like he wanted. Spider'paw sat there with a blank face. His eyes never wavered; his body rarely moved. "No." He voiced, his tail lying flatly on the ground. Rusty'claw was baffled of the tom not running off as he usually sees him. "What?" He huffed, his pupils expanding.

"No." He repeated. "I'm not letting you hurt me or anyone else." He leaned his head forward. "I can help you." His body tightening from how close the ginger tom was. His ancestor was screaming for him to run, and Peter was terrified. "You... **can't** help me." Rusty'claw backed away, his body weakened as he nearly collapsed from the hill. "I **can't** be saved. I've ruined my family and destroyed **his** honor." His voice strained when speaking of Firestar's legacy. "It's-..." Spider'paw looked down to the ground, there was a moment where he could feel himself suffering in that position.

"It's okay to fail. That's what makes a good warrior." He said, his voice low and calm. He was avoiding into causing an argument. "You don't have to follow his every step. You won't lose his honor."

"What about **my destiny?** How will I ever achieve my purpose?" Rusty'claw turned away, hiding the tears of grief, he was struggling to feel and to move on from the past. He could barely breathe; the exhaustion was causing his mind to go foggy. All he could hear were the voices, the voices of disappointment, failure, and misery. He was blind to find his sense of morality, and who he truly is on the inside. He was like a withering flower, crushed under a rock with no way out. Spider'paw approached him, his eyes lowering. There was a melancholic feel to air, he was speaking to a vulnerable cat with nothing to fend himself from the darkness. It was consuming him until he became a vessel looking for someone to mimic. "If... it helps." He began "You can maybe see your mother again. She's dying."

The warrior lifts up his head, he was wrapped around the smoke of his flames that he was caught off-guard from the news. "What?" He retorted. "Why would she need me?"

"She just wants to see you." The black tom responded. "They don't know when she will pass. But it's best to see her, **now.**"

In the corner of his eyes, he could see his brother standing out in the entrance. The swollen eyes that erupted in tears. There was hope, something Rusty'claw never felt before. He gave one last look at Spider'paw before approaching his brother, leaving the apprentice behind him. Spider'paw couldn't help but to watch the two brothers enter the camp. He hears them conversating with one another, he never wanted to barge in but only observed from a distance. His heart was beating warmly, it's the first he has ever made a change to someone's life.

Rusty'claw silently entered the medicine den, seeing Smoke'shade tending to an apprentice's need. Golden'flame sat at the corner, her eyes dull and gray. Her body dry and flaky, lacking her regular grooming techniques. She was frail like a malnourished hare, her half-lidded eyes baggy and riddled with eye boogers stuck onto the lids. Her fur had gotten pale, losing color and her hope with it. Her son wasn't going to see her as she imagined. It pained her knowing that she couldn't say sorry to him after all those years.

However, she saw a tall silhouette in front of her. The elder left

dumbfounded when she saw the ginger tom entering her area.

"Rusty'claw?.." She wept. "Is that you?"

"Yeah." The tom answered, moving close to his mother. His pupils dilating as he saw his weakened mother. It truly made him see the ugliness of his actions. "I'm sorry." He nudged her head. Golden'flame purred, the tears escaping her dry eyelids. "No, **I'm** sorry." Her tail curled up against her son, it was a reminder to how she fed him as a newborn kit. "I shouldn't have lied to you for all those years. I pushed him away when he wanted to be a father to you and your brother." The elder mother broke down in a sobbing mess. "Please, don't hate me longer."

He was surprised of the news, but he couldn't hate her no longer. He pressed his head close, as to never leave the frail she-cat behind. Spider'paw could see from the hill he was sitting on. The sun had finally set behind him, the ginger tom had found his peace, his face softened when hearing the cries of joy from the little family.

But.

He felt a vibration on his left, his pupils spotted a crushed, **yellow flower under a rock.** Was this SunClan's way of giving a message? Or is it anything more?

The tom had no clue, the only thing he could do is watch.

For now, he had bigger things to plan on, such as his ascension to warrior rank.

Chapter 27

When three quarter-moons have passed by, the day has **finally** come.

He finished his last training after two in a half-moon with some disruptions. He was now at the age of fifteen moons. He may be ready, but he was nervous about something. Something that relate to his own blood, who haven't been present for a good while. He sat in his apprentice den for the last time, wandering about his uncle and where he has gone. The apprentices, Orca'paw and Shell'paw entered the den, as they were also supposed to rank up with him.

"Hey." Orca'paw bluntly greets him. "My brother seems to be fond of a name he wanted to give you during your ceremony. But it's only a surprise." He sat on his moss bed, facing at the tom's direction. It made Spider'paw curious as to why Emerald'glare had done that. "Is Otter'star prone to give bad names?" He asked, which made the apprentice burst into laughter. "No dirt! One of our queens is named 'Clam'rage'! Who names a warrior that?" He fell over, catching himself into a laughing fit.

"They didn't like each other. 'Clam' probably fits her anyways." Shell'paw added, even bringing himself into a fit of laughter. That memory lived freely into their minds since they were kits. Spider'paw couldn't help but to purr in amusement. Although, he was still anxious of what name could be given to him. Spider'leg? Spider'claw? Spider'leaf? They all sound too basic and overused from time to time. He needed a new name, a name that hasn't been heard of in a while.

Just before he could speak, a cat yowls the meeting call.

"If you are old enough to swim through the harsh waves, gather beneath the blue rock for a meeting!"

Cats hurried to gather as they recognized Emerald'glare's voice.

They were curious, excited, and even nosy on who will be warriors today. Otter'star showed no interest in joining, the memory had got him so angry but intimidated to see Spider'paw exit the den. His eyes watered just from the sight of him gave a deadly reminder of **him**. The black tom finds himself sitting on the middle, Orca'paw and Shell'paw followed him. Cats were looking, their eyes stuck to the black tom. Spider'paw couldn't help but hide his face, the fear and nervousness coming back for the final battle. He knew now that he was going to leave **Sunflower** behind.

"Hearing rumors of a warrior ceremony is true. There are three that will rank up today." The deputy stood on the crystallized rock, his eyes focusing on the cats below him, especially his brother and his own apprentice. "Orca'paw, Spider'paw, and Shell'paw. Step up." He ordered, Spider'paw saw the two cats walking up below the shadow under the rock. Spider'paw looks around, some of the cats were suspicious to him. It was making him feel uncomfortable that many eyes were staining his back with fear and hopelessness. He quickly shook that off and followed the two toms towards the middle. Orca'paw's chest puffed up with pride. Shell'paw was rather tame about it, as it seems to be a normal day for him.

"I hereby call upon the spirits of SunClan to guide these three as they become shining stars of our clan." he prayed. **"I commend them as a warrior in the words of the great suns. I hope now that Wave'star will embrace them as the new generation of WaveClan!"**

There were two fellow warriors that were mentors of the two apprentices. Water'step was proud of his apprentice, as he had given his pride to the young and bold Orca'paw. Quiet'ripple was nearly about to burst into tears knowing that her son was now growing on her. It was bad enough that her daughter had to sit by and comfort her, some of the cats held their laughter from the entire meeting. Spider'paw seemed to be proud of the two apprentices, but he felt alone for some reason. They all had their families to watch them. Emerald'galre could tell that his own apprentice was feeling somber just from the sight of the apprentices and their families.

It didn't really help that Spider'paw knew he and Orca'paw were

related. It made him feel alone in some way, but he never bothered to show it. There's always a time and place; he was still happy for them at the end. As Orca'paw was firstly called, he observed carefully. He did hear a voice of his ancestor, whispering in the disguise of the cold wind that caused his shoulders to shudder.

"Look up."

He confused as to why the BloodClan ghost called him. His body vibrated, feeling a familiar company that was hiding in the shadows of the cave. He looks up to see what he didn't expect to be there.

Dusk'prowl.

His entire face brightened up; his heart beaten like never before. He thought he wasn't going to see him again, there were many questions as to why he had even passed the strict security of WaveClan's borders? Dusk'prowl stood in the darkness above, his cold eyes wandering at his nephew. He had made a promise, and he was going to commit to it. Spider'paw could feel his body turning into a whole pit of fire, the warmth traveled his veins. The feeling of hope now that he was there. He was now confident of the ceremony, the fear of everyone's judgement fell through to him like sand.

After Shell'brindle has been renamed, it was now time for Spider'paw.

Emerald'glare moved from the rock, approaching to his apprentice. He rested his nose on Spider'paw's forehead. "I'm proud of you." He whispered, and then backing away from him to conclude the ceremony by giving his name last. "**Spider'paw, do you promise to fight and defend for your clan, even at the cost of your life? Will you learn to follow the sacred code, and provide our intelligence and wisdom to others?**"

Spider'paw's head never wavered, his eyes firm as sharp, hefty rocks. "I do." He responded.

"By the might of SunClan, you will be known as SPIDER'STALK from now on. SunClan will honor your strategy, kindness, and

wisdom."

The clan was left silent from that name. The forbidden prefix of an old warrior who left the clan in a slip of the cliff. The grief that struck the clan for many seasons. But the deputy knew the clan needed to move on, the name had fit greatly for the newly apprentice. Although, the new warrior's appearance didn't really help with anything. It was a bold decision, that even Dusk'prowl nearly slipped from where he was at.

Spider'stalk, noticed the silence. Had he done something wrong to anger them?

He desperately looked around, only to be greeted with agitated stares, the elders distancing themselves from him. It was silent that only a small pebble could be dropped and still heard. The grim atmosphere continuing all the way until the end.

As the newly appointed warrior sat in front of the raging beach, Ghost'breeze was left in shock. The sun shined between them, the shadows of the past **lurking.**

"They did what?" She caught her breath, her eyes widening from shock.

"No one said anything. They all just stared at me as if I was born with five heads." He explained, his eyes heavy from the wide disappointment of the clan. "Did I do something wrong?" He asked her with a genuine look. His eyes showing the hint of his innocence. Ghost'breeze couldn't say anything, she **wasn't** supposed to say it. She knew now that one word could burn a whole forest.

"No. no." The SunClan warrior reassured him. "They were just hurt from the past; you have nothing to fear for. I promise." She gently nuzzled him, her tail swayed anxiously. Spider'stalk was left suspicious of his friend, but he didn't want to ask. It wasn't his business. He just stares out to the blue waves, hoping that his vigil will fill in his skeptical mind.

It will be nothing more than just him, and him only.

The new warriors had been assigned, but one had nearly caused an uproar.

Orca'leap.

Shell'brindle.

Spider'stalk.

Chapter **28**

The Spider released into the night, leaving his web as his quiet paws stalked into the thick bushes.

He was challenged to defend the territory until sun high and given three tasks. One was to explore the territories and study them, two is to catch a prey for the fresh-kill pile to show loyalty, and last was self-meditation. A spiritual study to learn the way of SunClan. Though, they were a struggle mainly to something that most warriors had picked him on, his size.

He could barely carry a fish without tumbling everywhere, he had to learn to balance himself as he handled the stubborn prey before him. It was torture, but he went through just fine. Spider'stalk found a secluded clearing, where the full moon presented in the brightest form. It had been a while that he saw the prettiest silver full moon since kit-hood. He had always been annoyed, realizing that the sun is **always** there, hence the name SunClan's Soil for a reason. The stars flickered, seeing that the tom was now alone.

What he noticed were green eyes staring down at him. His fur shot up. For a moment, he felt the adrenaline rushing in just from seeing the ominous pupils of a cat in the skies. *Who are they? Is it SunClan watching me*?

"What is that?" The warrior murmured in confusion.

The cat did not answer and only materialized with the clouds around her, watching the unfortunate tom. It was who the sun speaks of, but it is never enough to realize what mistake SunClan was making. She had to warn him, it was the only thing that could protect him for what's to come. Her body was like the wind flying between the thick canopy of the verdant leaves. Spider'stalk found his way to the shores of WaveClan, standing onto a specific dune hill that was high enough to touch the stars in the sky. The Silvergaze was a way to connect with the night, a rarity of

a land who is birthed by the sun. The moon lies high and mighty, with stars twinkling a melody that was the sign of an ethereal presence the young warrior is witnessing.

The tom watched, the green eyes appear in a black mist that formed from the clouds. It took on feline-like form, staring down at the warrior, who began to stumble back. Spider'stalk was shocked, terrified even. His paws dug onto the sand, and his heartbeat quickened. The tides increases when the moon warrior appears in front of the shore.

Who was this mystery of a cat floating above him?

"You might be wondering why I'm looking over you." The she-cat spoke; her pupils created a streak of light that rained over the black cat. *"Take my presence as a warning and run away."* She spoke in a amused timbre, noticing how far back the warrior is. Spider'stalk did want to run away truthfully, but he noticed how somber her expression is. To whatever she wanted out of him, it had to be important. "I thought SunClan do cryptic messages." He says, standing there awkwardly. Jade'moon agreed with his statement, her large form moves close to the tallest hill. *"That too, but I'm more straightforward. You might be in danger."*

"In danger? That's like the second time!" The tom exclaimed, he was still frustrated to Peter's lack of presence after what was heard in his dream. Jade'moon shook her head. *"You may know of the ginger, but you are not aware of what the **Absolute** has in plan for you. The future is grim."* Her paws touch the dark blue waters underneath the silvery, warm glow of the moon. Her words bring many thoughts to the young tom's mind. "I've done nothing but to find my path to this clan. What do they want from **me?**" He asked, with a feeling of desperation that may have been related to his identity.

*"You have a **destiny**, a grim one that could seal your fate in a pit of flames. The **sunset** is willing to put you in that position by the orders of the **Absolute**, I wish for you to be vigilant of when the time comes."* Jade'moon's expression darkened, and her voice became serious to her warning.

This caught the tom off-guard.

"Woah, woah, I thought everyone had a **destiny?** Why would their attention be put on me? Have I done something wrong?" The tom's tail was curved in a low position not too far from the ground. His anxiety was starting to built in, his body trembled like a mouse under a lion's paw. It worried Jade'moon. She never meant to see everyone around her to fight and fear, even the ones closest to her that defied her words of wanting to prevent chaos on both sides. She lowers her head, a large nose nudging the tom's forehead, a maternal move coming from the moon warrior.

*"Neither do you and him had done anything wrong. For all I see the chaos and misery around, this is all the **Absolute's** doing."* She said. *"I want you to be strong, and to be aware. Sometimes, not **anyone** can be trusted. With a **destiny** to live on from one generation to another, can create a dangerous cycle if left in the wrong paws. I want you to remember that the cycle can break if one has the strength to let go."*

Spider'stalk watched as he slowly backs away, the tides rising in every movement she makes before reducing as she moves up to the clouds. The warrior ran close to the tip of the Silvergaze, it almost as if he wanted to ask her something before she leaves. "When does everything happen?" He asked, hoping for a proper answer before the entity leaves his side. Jade'moon didn't want to leave him hopeless, his life depended on whether the **Absolute** makes a move to seal his fate. *"When fire begins to spark, they will want you to meet them in the realm of SunClan in a shape of a **trial**."* She says, her body slowly fading off with the gray clouds parting their ways. The warrior watch her disappear in front of him, it gave off a melancholic feel to see her go.

*"Don't let their words define **you**."*

The warrior slips into darkness, the clouds breaking apart as the last of her is joined in the stars. She appears as a constellation to him.

This talk let the tom work with what he had, and what the future had in store for him.

Chapter **29**

As it stayed sunny every day, the clouds never missed to pour in the house that's once called home.

The two-legs were nowhere to be seen, so the residence was left quiet, and tensions heavy. Lee, glances out of the upstairs open window, seeing the rain that poured down outside the house. the young, and tiny Dandelion stood by his side. She wondered about her brother who left the house moons ago. Where has he gone?

Just below the stairs, the black, orange-eyed tom laid on his bed. His scar-ridden body malnourished, and dangerously skinny. His dry, pale eyes bouncing from side to side from paranoia. This wasn't what he used to be; this was the beginning of an end for him. The fallen hero that once soared into the skies had finally taken his fall, but he didn't think he took his entire family down the cliff of misfortune with him. Carmen never left the window ledge; she cried for her son to return. She was begging the skies to fix what had been broken, she didn't want to live in that house where the eternal silence is present without her son.

She tearfully turned to Jeffrey, her reddened eyes begging for his attention. "When will he come back?" She started asking, the black tom grunted irritably. "You always speak about him." he responded in a harsh timbre. "There's no hope, he isn't coming back. That's just how it is." He dragged himself out of the bed, his body limping and pained from the constant movement. The cracks appeared on his sclera, he also had trouble breathing. His slow movements approached the couch, where the window is located. "I can't stop him now." He spoke.

Carmen's eyes grew into rage, her body stiffened from the lack of awareness her 'mate' was expressing. "So, you're setting him up like a pig for a slaughterhouse?" She retorted. "All this should've never happened if you just **tell him the truth**!" Her voice caused Jeffrey to flinch, his tail shooting towards the ceiling from how loud the she-cat had screamed. "Calm yourself!" He hissed. "It was his fault

that he never listens. His skull is hard as a rock."

"It's still your responsibility!" Her claws unsheathed, scratching the white wood of the ledge. "The more you keep the secret from him, the more damage it'll be when all of your mess is revealed!"

"I can only **do** so much!" Jeffrey leapt on the soft fabric of the couch, his eyes burning through his disoriented facade, he was losing control. His shoulders slouched down as he gripped the couch with his old claws. He was fighting back the rage that he held for the ones who tried taking his life away, he thought he had done a good deed for taking his son away from the outsiders. "I will not let those cats take him away, and yet you encouraged him to follow his foolish ideas. Now look at **us,** look at **me!**" The tears erupted from his eyes; the fizzy saliva poured from the corners of his mouth. "We're **broken**!"

"No, no, there **is** hope!" Carmen leaned from the ledge; a gasp escaped her maw when seeing her mate pushing himself to the limit. "You can't die and leave your son to fend off on his own!" She jumped down, his ears pinned onto her head. She nudged her body against him. "Please don't let go of him, there's still a chance!" She pressed her head at his shoulder. Jeffrey, struggling to move. He wanted to hiss at her and keep her away from him. But her tears were making him conflicted. He pondered the feeling of losing his son without a chance of reconciliation, he wasn't even able to tell him the truth of his past, and that's what broke him.

The voices taunted him in every way, breaking him until he was left as a rusty scavenger toy.

He harmed everything and everyone in his life, he left his home in disarray and hatred, He was even afraid of leaving the house due to his past destroying him from the inside and out. He sobbed his eyes out, his head burying onto Carmen's neck. He known himself as an immortal hero, falling into the life of a maddened, paranoid father. His frail body curls up with his mate, begging to her. "...I want to live." He speaks. "But I don't know how. I don't know how to end this cycle of torture that **shattered** our family. I need help... please... **we** need help."

Lee sat on the stars, watching as the two cats united in grief. Dandelion hid behind him, her body trembling from the loud voices of her parents arguing. She rested her head against the striped, ginger's leg. Lee felt a slight push, seeing that the little sister had found comfort of his presence. He had to uphold the role as an older brother to her, he couldn't help but to see her all alone, without **Sunflower**. In the corner of his eyes, he saw a tall silhouette of a cat from the past, standing out in the rain and drenching his fur. Dusk'prowl was watching, he knew now that he needed to get one's attention.

Lee, now realizing who it was. He looks at Dandelion, nudging her with his muzzle. "I'll be right back."

As he left the area, he went upstairs and spotted Dusk'prowl standing on the ledge of the window near the end of the hall. This **wasn't** the only time the tom had trespassed to speak with him, as he done numerous times. "...Did anything happen? Is Sunflower alright at least?" The questions poured like raging waterfalls. Lee couldn't help but blame himself for the death of a friendship. He waited for the rogue to answer his question.

"He's alive, he's well." Dusk'prowl answered. "But things won't be sunshine and rainbows any time soon. **Storm'strike's planning a raid.**"

"A raid!?" Lee padded forward, his ears flattening as he watched the rogue paced on the window ledge. "We need to get **Sunflower** back into the house!" He panicked, now leaping at the white, wooden ledge. "Follow me." Dusk'prowl urged, exiting out of the window and carefully getting ahold of the creaking, drenched tree coming from the rough storm. The overwhelming winds rushing inside Softpaw's nostrils and causing him to feel nauseous as he followed the tom out of the window. It was a horrible idea, but he was willing to do what he could to find his friend.

"If you walk out of that house, you **cannot** run back!" He yowled, now briefly jumping from branch to branch, landing onto the wet grounds with his paws. "I'm **counting** on you!"

Lee carefully adjusted himself, and boldly jumped out of the tree,

jumping into a thorny bush that caused him to writhe in pain. But he couldn't stop now, he was already out of the house.

His strong arms crouched underneath the bushy leaves until he was in the rainy clearing and took off with the rogue.

Chapter **30**

Just after a few more quarter-moons, the storms were becoming more frequent now that the panic has begun to settle. Not even cats couldn't tell what was happening, what they believed was a punishment from SunClan for that disaster of a gathering that happened a moon ago.

It was **partially** true.

They had no time to waste, rumors of a raid were starting to spread like wildfire, and two clans had been caught in the middle of it. Rusty'claw had found himself conflicted if he ever wanted to continue the prophecy or stay with his family now that he is slowly trying to find his way back to being what he was. Clearly, it seems he didn't have a choice. The voice of SunClan demanded the prophecy to be made, so that destiny can make its way through, and hopefully there won't be a repeat like last time.

"I know that the prophecy spoke of you and that other tom." His mother spoke in a worryingly way. She was just now starting to get her energy back, and her frail body growing stronger than before. "Isn't what you truly wanted? Rusty'claw?" She asked, nudging his shoulder carefully. The ginger tom sat there as he stared into the carved, rocky walls, speechless. Yellow'petal looked away, the impending silence took over the small area. "He's over that, mom." He responded, suddenly irritated. "Can't they choose another?"

Smoke'shade's raspy voice interrupts him, as she is currently cleaning her herb pile. "**Destiny** cannot change." Her chilling voice caused the ginger tom's fur to protrude. Yellow'petal's slit pupils narrowed at the thought. Smoke'shade approached the elder she-cat, giving her a vole. The light ginger tom couldn't help but ask: "Why? Why does **destiny** happen? Why should we be the one to suffer from SunClan's decision?" He moved close towards Rusty'claw, his stoic face hiding his concerns. Smoke'shade sat there, her head shaking somberly. "As much as we blame SunClan,

they clearly have no control. It's just the way of life. The good and the bad will create what you are; a warrior."

"That's horse-dirt!" Yellow'petal protested. "We've created families... generations! We've even worked our hinds off to serve these self-righteous spirits just to be killed off like crow-food!?"

"You do know that's not what they're trying to say!" The grumpy elder, Tiger'talon abruptly joined their conversation. "Once a **destiny** is broken, the territory **will** be the one to suffer the consequences!"

"Shut up!" Yellow'petal hissed, his stubbornness showing beneath the cracks. Rusty'claw moved in front of him, his eyes firm. "Quit it!" He ordered, stepping right in front of the elder when his brother attempted to rush at him. "You will not make a fool out of me and you. Everyone's lives are on my paws, including yours. I have no choice but to... do it." His tone felt unsure, but he was standing on his choice with no refusal. "Are... you crazy!? You're getting yourself killed! We can move, we can be free and live together!"

Rusty'claw didn't have any choice of words, his heart sank when he heard Burning'tail calling his name.

"Rusty'claw! Sun'star wants you."

The entire medicine den froze, his mother looked like she was going to sob her eyes out, and his brother was filled with rage, not towards him, but those who encouraged him. "Don't go!" He called desperately. "We can run together!" He begged. There was no use, Rusty'claw could see himself trot right of that entrance, leaving his family behind as they watched in horror. Although, courage and pride lived in his heart as always, he could feel the past mistakes and memories piling onto him. Remembering how he left his family for this exact reason, but it wasn't just for himself anymore.

A drizzle of rain hits his back as he makes his way to the clearing where Sun'star is being interrogated by nothing other than Fire'light, Cherry'fang, and Wood'bark. His brows furrowed at the sight of Cherry'fang, she knew that she had took upon the traitorous deals of Storm'strike in the past. But he ignored, only passing by the

new young warrior who looked just like Yellow'petal, but had blue eyes. The siblings noticed the tom, though they had mixed emotions, Cherry'fang just chooses to hide behind them, causing further suspicion.

"Rusty'claw." Sun'star began, his eyes radiating with power behind his eyes. His tail swayed from side to side, his muscles tense from the anxiety given by the message about the rogues. "I want to task you on a tunneling patrol with **Spider'stalk.**" He said, the suffix of the name causing him to shiver a bit. Rusty'claw was questioned by the name, recognizing that this was the cat who saved him from his downward spiral, the cat he is supposedly paired with to defeat the storm. "Him?" He asked, just to make sure. Sun'star nodded affirmatively. "We don't know how much long the prophecy can wait. I need you to be in WaveClan by sun high."

"I.." Rusty'claw's hesitation was hard to miss, it caused some doubt in their faces. "I will." He nodded, now getting on his way. Sun'star responded with a sigh of ease. "Good."

The tom makes his way out of the entrance, the pressure weighing heavy like two large boulders. His eyes darted at the rock with the crushed yellow flower below it. But he ignored it, for now.

At the other side of the territory, Spider'stalk sat on the sandy beach with Ghost'breeze once again. He seemed to be shown his early experiences into being a young warrior. The SunClan disciple couldn't help but to compliment him every now and then. "You know, I'm impressed." She speaks. "I couldn't imagine handling lots of stress, those cats can shove a dirt up their hinds if they only think of your name coming from the past." She spoke in a somewhat egotistical manner, yet there was still fear hidden under her face.

"Really?" The tom looks up at her. It was making him flustered a bit. "I've only made **some** progress, but it doesn't feel enough... you know?" He nudged at her shoulder, his eyes focused on her. "I can relate to that." She responded in a genuine manner. "But every small victory is a path to success. You just need to learn to take it." The gray she-cat purred, Spider'stalk rolled his yellow eyes. "That's something an overachiever would say." He joked, causing the SunClan warrior to scoff in offense. "You can't achieve, if you can't

live."

The young warrior laughed it off, it didn't take long for him to stop laughing completely as he saw those scarlet eyes emerging from the darkening clouds in the distance. His heart stopped; the ringing of his ears returned. He locked eyes with the mysterious figure, losing his voice, and the air of his body.

"Spider'stalk?"

He couldn't hear anything, the fur pointed to the skies above him, his body frozen like a petrified body after a harsh winter.

"*Spider'stalk.*"

Her voice couldn't get through but only hearing the baritone humming of the bleeding sun. His eyes vengeful of what spirit he sees in the tom. He could smell and taste the metallic scent of blood that stained the spirit's fur red. He wanted to know that **his past will be the sole reason of his downfall.** He could only hear the sunset taunting his ears, giving him confusion as to who was talking to him, until his friend snapped him to reality.

"**SPIDER'STALK!**" She yelled out of fear, the tom immediately jumps from his original spot, collapsing onto the small hill behind him, startling Emerald'glare and Oleander'cloud who was also wanting him for a reason. The three cats gave glares from one to the other. What has the young warrior seen? "Spider'stalk.." Emerald'glare quickly approached him, his expression troubled. "Are you alright?"

"Yeah! Yeah-" The warrior was dizzy; he could barely stand up. "I'm fine, I'm **very** fine."

Emerald'glare was showing doubt of his conditioned, he nudged at him, encouraging the tom to get up. "You're going to the medicine den first to check up on you." He explained. Spider'stalk couldn't budge, as it was important due to the future tasks he has to uphold. He gave Ghost'breeze a look, as if silently stating his farewells to her, until next time. The SunClan warrior watched him leave, the eyes of the sunset caused her body to suffer a painful shock on body. The invisible pain of wounded scars was like glass shards

stabbing her back, she couldn't help but to continue looking. She only has a few chances now to tell him the real deal.

She had many tasks on her own, she shouldn't want to worry about a mere tom who is inferior to her power.

However, the guilt was creeping onto her like little spiders. She gave one last look at the small group before flying out to the skies, meeting the needs of the great spirits.

Chapter **31**

Spider'stalk was assigned to a very important duty, to patrol the tunnels. But the only awkward thing, is that he'll have to be with Rusty'claw.

"Don't get lost on me." He warned. They settled on to the dark tunnels, the ominous rushing water of both the rain and the sea on their left side. Spider'stalk still felt dizzy, he gave a nod at his former enemy. He was trying hard not to fall over. When he approached near the **Opal's Eye**, he couldn't help but to feel the flashbacks rushing at him. Seeing his uncle again, and the killing of Moonie. He couldn't forgive himself for that, even if they had bad intentions to him and the clans. He had to ignore the voice of urge coming from his ancestor who showed disdain towards Rusty'claw.

"I won't be flea-brained... if that's what I think you're going to say." Spider'stalk murmured, he squints his eyes when he passed by the pond. The two entered the main tunnel that tracks all the way to BreezeClan's caves, the atmosphere turning dark once more. "I only say that to those with a dense mind. That you lack of." Rusty'claw appeared walking behind the young warrior. Although, he still retained his snarky demeanor, he was starting to act different around him. "But that doesn't make you safe in my eyes." There was a hint of amusement in his dry tone. "Oh, I'm scared." The small warrior remarked sarcastically. "Can't I breathe without you trying to take me down?"

"Hmph, I thought you fish cats can learn to breathe underwater." Rusty'claw padded in front of him, coming across a number of three tunnels in front of him. They have gone further down from WaveClan's cave. "Are your clan this obsessed with caves, crystals, and secrecy?" He gestured at the three tunnels in front of him, he was irritated and intrigued all at the same time. "I don't know." Spider'stalk shrugged, sitting on the middle. "I always thought they were descendants of an old, dead clan and a tribe."

"Huh..." Rusty'claw nodded. "Well, I'll be patrolling near the right side, close to BreezeClan's border. You go near BlazeClan's border, alright?" He asked, Spider'stalk purred in response. "Alright."

The tom watched as Rusty'claw disappeared. It left him with unease now that he was there to do the job on his own. It made him wonder how his former enemy have truly felt. It left a lot of questions that made the tom want to learn more. He hasn't even heard of him in about a few quarter-moons, he hoped better after convincing him to let go of his crooked choices. But now, he has a lot more things to worry about. As he wandered around the cave, he thought about the Moon warrior that night after his ceremony. He didn't think his friends could let him down, he didn't think anyone was after him at the moment. He had already found his **destiny**, so why could he be warned?

As time went by, he was only met with the silence of every area. His ears twitched for noise, and his paws quiet as a falling feather. He hoped that he could come back to camp and see Ghost'breeze in once piece. But his pupils narrowed when he spots a random cat below the ledge of a spacious cave. He looks like someone he knew and never seen in a while. His eyes were blue as the sapphires stuck onto the walls of the camp. The mysterious tom appeared to be in good shape, but unrecognizable by clan terms, which left Spider'stalk with one thing. **Pursue him.**

His quiet paws allowed him to come closer, the darkness of the cave gave him the ability to camouflage between the rocks. His small, slender body could go through the hidden spaces with no struggle. His pupils were locked on the target, his tail lashed, and his ears pinned down. The mysterious tom anxiously paced around; he wasn't used to be left like that. The rogue clearly hasn't come back to give him the signal, so he was left alone to fend for himself.

What **Lee** didn't know was a familiar face pouncing at him. Claws were unsheathed, and the slick body of the wilted flower sprung at the middle of the cave, tackling him. Spider'stalk was blinded by the fact that he had forgot who the tom is. His face instantly changed into shock and fear as the two cats collided onto one another, Lee kicked his belly using his hind legs. "Sunflower!?" He exclaimed, falling onto his back after screaming his hind off.

"Lee!?" Spider'stalk's paws drifted onto the rocky service, his muscles relaxed. His pupils dilated when seeing someone that he had knew for the longest. He ran at him, panicking. "Oh my gosh, I'm sorry! I'm really sorry!" The tom yowled, his tail tucking underneath his hind legs. "No, no! Stay back!" Lee moved away from him, his heart racing. His paws clung onto his chest, his body facing onto the ceiling of the cave. It left Spider'stalk thinking that he had scared the tom to death. "Look, I'm sorry!" He pleaded, approaching him. "Let me help you."

Lee stared at the tom; his calm voice was helping his soft soul to be at ease. But he couldn't find himself to be glad. It seems like he was angry, but at the same time he couldn't yell at him like he truly wanted to. "Why-..." He breathed. "Why did you leave? Me and your uncle were looking for you." He wheezed. "I wanted to ask if you can come home... with me."

"...You met my uncle?" Spider'stalk asked, he sat down and nudged his friend's chest in an attempt to comfort him. "I don't know if I can come home. They kicked me out." His head stood low, close to his friend's forehead now. He was smelling him, remembering the scent of his Softpaw home. It gave him nostalgia, but he never had the courage to find himself stepping back into that place. "Your father is sick." Lee explained, his eyes left in despair. He could feel Spider'stalk freezing from the subject of his father. "And-..." He turned his head, just barely. His voice trembled, hiding his obvious saddened expression. "Why does he need me?"

"He's been to the cutter; they have no clue what's wrong with him." Lee moved himself from the cold floor, his body now on his haunches. "I'm sure that he wants to see you again. I believe that you leaving had caused him to become that way."

"I've already found a place here." Spider'stalk sternly replied. "I don't want to hear anything about him no longer." He then jumped from his spot, ready to leave and continue on with his patrol. "Now, leave me be."

Lee's lower jaw clenched in frustration. He moves in front of the warrior. "**No.**" He growled. "You can't run away from all of this anymore. Your **family** needs you, think about Dandelion whose

been wanting to see you for so long!" He stomped on the ground, hissing at the tom. Spider'stalk batted his head, yelling. "You care more about having me back in that prison. I assure you that they wouldn't want to let me see her, even if I tried!" He crouched down, his pupils widening when he spotted a large shadow above the ledge. Lee shoved the tom, spitting and showing teeth at the tom.

The tension-filled environment turned heavy as both of their emotions spilled out like an angry river from a broken dam. "I have to be the one to take care of her! **I** had to be the **bigger** brother when **you** left without a trace!"

"Lee..." Spider'stalk's voice went quiet, his eyes glaring at the dangerous figure that with a large size that grew in every step it took. A beast was preying in the shadows.

"Hello!?" Lee shoved the tom, batting him away with his paw. "Don't you dare run away!"

"Stay down!" The black tom warned. "There's something behind you!"

"Don't lie to me, you are **not** running away!" He cried; all of the stress was now pouring onto the warrior whom he thought to be a loyal friend. Although, he didn't think the tom was actually warning him. He hears a low, monstrous growl behind him, a scent of blood triggering his adrenaline. His tail shot up, now recognizing the danger behind him.

"NO!" Spider'stalk yelled. "**GET DOWN!**"

Lee spun around.

A light-brown and ticked sharp tooth lunged from the abyss, with claws unsheathed, and eyes redder as the thick blood on its maw.

Chapter **32**

During the patrol, Rusty'claw had come across some commotion close to the deepest of the caves. His muscles tensing when he spotted an old ally getting surrounded.

"You're a traitor!" A rogue named Bigwig called to their so-called 'deputy', being seen to lure a sharp tooth to kill the Saviors off. A group of five cats stood behind them. Their tails whipped the rocks as they began to aggressively approach him. Dusk'prowl had nothing to say, he wanted to deny all of the rumors. But sensing that Moonie had broken the news of Inky's death being blamed on his nephew, he didn't have a choice. "I'll stand on what I've said, and what I've done." Dusk'prowl growled. "But you will not set a single foot to harm him!"

Nephew? Rusty'claw questioned, it didn't take long for him to connect the dots.

"You haven't even spoke to him since that night!" Moonie chastised. "How dare you protect some cat who murdered your own members!" She moved close to him; her claws were ready to spill blood if needed. Dusk'prowl didn't cower or even backed away. He just sat there, soullessly. "Do what you do. You know that he will pummel your clan and that pathetic leader of yours with a snap of his paws." He bickered, causing the loyal she-cat to lunge at him with tears in her eyes.

"**TRAITOR!**"

Just as the cats were starting to close in, the ginger tom leapt from the ledge. His curled claws digging onto Bigwig's back, pulling him away from the scene. The large tom yowled and fell back. He could feel Rusty'claw's fangs protruding against his neck, he uses his claws to brutally scratch the tom's side, which caused him to release. Dusk'prowl handled the other four with grace, and what he was taught to use towards enemies. He jumped forward, clawing one of

the cat's backs and moving away from being cornered. He was scarred by his thigh, which caused him to slip between Bigwig and Rusty'claw.

He was shocked that the ginger tom had come to fight with him.

Rusty'claw fell back, bleeding on his side. He could see Moonie and Cream jumping at him, in attempt to hold the tom down. "Get back, rogue scum!" The ginger tom hissed, and got on his hind legs, clawing Cream right in the face. He caused deep scar that poked her left eye out, making the she-cat to fall back. Moonie charged at his neck, and Wasp switched to the other side. The two rogues coordinated the attack, tackling and confining him.

Johnny and Bigwig attempted to corner the 'deputy' again. Dusk'prowl suffered an injury coming from a sprained, front left arm. It was swollen from how sharply he jumped. He could feel himself drastically weakening. Bigwig laughed, taunting the deputy. "The Prowler is now suffering his first defeat!" He jeered; Johnny joined him on his left. "Killing you will be my prize. Maybe Storm'strike will see something in me after all." Bigwig's large paw pressed his chest down on the ground. Dusk'prowl glanced at Rusty'claw who was in similar situation.

Behind Bigwig, his eyes narrowed, seeing a light ginger tom running towards them. He also had backup cats that ran behind him. They screamed names and hissed at the unwelcomed guests. Rusty'claw gasped, realizing who the tom is, his brother.

Meanwhile, Spider'stalk was dragging the injured Lee by his scruff as the beast went on a rampage. The sharp tooth's eyes were glued to its prey, its lean, agile body allowed it to catch up with the small tom who was desperately trying to find a place to hide. His eyes flickered green, his speed increasing the moment he heard his ancestor's words, hurrying him into a narrow spot where the sharp tooth will have a hard time getting to. Lee was left unconscious; the bleeding wound went from his side to his belly, leaking tremendous amounts of blood that nearly caused Spider'stalk to pass out.

He didn't want to lose his friend; he didn't want to lose a family member of his own. he cursed himself for even getting him into his

mess in the first place. The voices of his father yelling at him and making him feel as if he was just like his uncle. He got into a narrow tunnel, leaving the raging beast clawing at the rocks, even banging its body onto the walls that caused the cave to **crack.**

The battle continued, BlazeClan's warriors were now chasing the rogues off. Yellow'petal had killed off Moonie, her heavily scarred body laying below the tom. His muscles hardened from the adrenaline. He gazed at his brother, who was left in silence. Not even Dusk'prowl was aware of what his brother is capable of doing. "I'm not letting you do this alone." The light ginger tom approached his brother, he panted. His fur was filled with the blood of Moonie. "You know this life isn't going to bring you nowhere."

"**Destiny** has already happened. You have no need to intervene!" Rusty'claw snarled. "I can do this on my own."

"No." Yellow'petal shook his head. "You **don't** understand. SunClan is sending you to **death!**"

Dusk'prowl noticed the stalactites began to tremble. His pupils dilated at the sound of a struggling tom trying to run.

"I'm doing what's best for all of us! I'm doing it for **you!** Not for myself anymore!" The ginger warrior's expression scrunched with irritation. "Why can't you just be satisfied!?"

"I **am!**" Yellow'petal yelled, his voice echoed the caves that caused the stalactites to tremble erratically. "I'm not letting those spirits use you as some vessel of their plans! You need to leave **this** prophecy be! I will not leave you for death! Isn't what I promised yo-"

A large bang is heard in the distance. Dusk'prowl spotted his nephew running from the tunnel, a trail of blood came from the injured Lee being carried. He didn't hesitate to run after his nephew as the cave started to collapse, leaving the brothers. Rusty'claw and Yellow'petal swiveled as the rocks were hitting the grounds, and the stalactites falling around them. One of them had the sharp tooth leaping from one of them, charging at Yellow'petal.

Rusty'claw's heart nearly stopped, he pushed his brother out of the

way, screaming.

"**RUN!**"

"**I'm not running without you!**" Yellow'petal yelled, now running behind Rusty'claw as their balancing was challenged by the trembling walls of the cave. The tom's legs rushed him to the rising ledge where it was being elevated by the cave's force. He could feel the earth croaking as the walls crushed the sharp tooth that was after them. But most importantly, his brother was with him. He had finally found his old spirit, and had given the opportunity to change for him, and for his mother. He couldn't lose him; he couldn't lose what he had been craving for a long time.

There was a vision of them running across the thick greenery as kits, forgetting the harsh realities of their lives and how their father had left Golden'flame, which Rusty'claw swore to never become like him. They were just young, mouse-brained kits who were close, and matched with their playful and mischievous personalities. They were like twins, forever bonded. It was something that Rusty'claw was afraid of letting go. He did lose his family for two moons, almost feeling like it was forever. He couldn't escape the void of his past mistakes, his selfishness, his **guilt** for what pain he had given to Web'star and WaveClan themselves. He couldn't have the courage to just admit what he did.

But having the responsibility weighing on his shoulders, he learned to accept, he learned the power over his emotions and what valued more than fame and ancestral honor, his family. Seeing that his own brother was running with him, as the caves suffered the destruction around them, he thought he was going to run out of the cave together, with his bonded twin.

Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. **Destiny** is something more than just prophecies.

Yellow'petal felt the exhaustion that caused him to slow down, a shard caught into his paw, causing his to yelp and trip on himself. Spider'stalk, and Dusk'prowl was already standing out in the entrance nearing the border of BreezeClan. All of the clans were startled by the quaking underground. Spider'stalk's eyes widened

when seeing Rusty'claw barely escaping the cave, as the ginger made a last-minute turnaround to go and save his brother.

"**NO!**" The black tom cried frantically. "**DON'T GO DOWN THERE!**"

Rusty'claw didn't listen, the tears rushed down on his eyes. "**BROTHER!**" He makes his way down the hills, but the distance became even longer when the ground plates groaned and cracked. Yellow'petal was desperately trying to run, wanting to live for his brother. But **Destiny** had made its way.

As the ginger tom hopped from rock to rock, the wall had crashed down, causing large amounts of debris to crush Yellow'petal's body. The blood splattered from underneath the debris and came from his mouth. His eyes bulged and he began to immediately choke on blood. He led out gurgling cries, his paws reaching out to Rusty'claw, thinking that he'll make it out of the cave.

Rusty'claw led out a blood-curdling yowl, his brother has been caught in the fallen debris. Spider'stalk quickly got in front pushing him out the way. Dusk'prowl gripped the ginger tom by the scruff.

The uncle and nephew quickly ran out of the cave with the grieving tom who wouldn't stop moving, he hissed and batted the rogue to let go. "**LET GO! LET ME GO!**" He shrieked, finding his entire body go limp, and his stomach tightening as he saw his brother twitching under the rocks.

The last thing he saw, was his brother mouthing his last words.

"**Tell mom.**"

They escaped the cave, barely. The entire tunnel was crushed and blocked off, leaving the tom in the hands of death.

Chapter **33**

His screams were vocalized throughout the entirety of the mountains. His claws scraped the dirt, attempting to go back in that cave and save him. But nothing couldn't help, he was only left outside as the two cats held him back. Spider'stalk's small body gave it all when he confines Rusty'claw to the ground. It only left him with guilt, knowing that this day may have changed things forever.

The solemn ashes of the debris rose to the skies, the soft humming of the wind creaked the trees as the small tom walked with his uncle. His paws cracked the dead leaves, the cold front entering the territory, that marked the first day of leaf-fall. Dusk'prowl sat above the hill, watching as group of BlazeClan cats surrounded the tom near the Great watering hole. His back felt sharp pain, reminiscing the eyes of an old friend, the storm rumbled above him, the eyes stared at a forest burning down, and black feathers that fell before him.

Spider'stalk sat next to him, not saying a peep. Although, he was glad that his uncle had made it out alive, the reputation weighed heavily onto him now that WaveClan was not accepting of the rogue. But all of that had to be dealt with later, the loss is still heavily glued onto his mind. His ears vibrated the loud yelp the ginger tom led out. The anger of a thousand fires rampaging the forests, he went across the cliffs to save him, to save his family. Now everything is at a waste, nothing was worth it now. The prophecy is at stake, and Spider'stalk doesn't know what to do now.

The fireflies lit up the entirety of the watering hole, groups of cats lined at the edge as they saw the memorial of the late warrior. The voices were silent, and left guilty that they let this warrior go on a dangerous pursuit, only to be crushed in the debris. Disputes of BreezeClan and TerraClan had been put to an end, both leaders were now standing together to watch the vigil. The elderly prepping flowers that they've harvested in Cedar'star permission. Spider'stalk watched as the stars circled the area, and the full moon making a

presence.

They say that every death is remembered and celebrated under a full moon. The cries of the fallen stars grieving over the loss that cannot be controlled. Only a shooting star can immortalize his memories forever. The specks of ghostly petals fell from the sky, his soul departed the lands, leaving his family for good.

Rusty'claw watched.

He memorized every detail of the vigil from beginning to end, the prayers to SunClan, the spoken memories of cats, flowers and gifts that were decorating his grave. His heart slowed from beating; his eyes never shut. He just sat there with no sense in mind, he had to take care of his sobbing mother who felt her entire body shut down. He had no choice but to do so. The recollections of images from the past lingered his mind, he turns to a cat next to him. Seeing that his brother is still standing, and watching as his fur shimmered under the stars, he pretended that his death didn't happen as he felt his warm presence, shielding him from reality.

Golden'flame's cries can be heard close to the entrance of camp where Smoke'shade and Sun'star attempted to comfort her.

Fire'light sat next to her brother, watching. She noticed that Rusty'claw was purring, as his words only spoke to the wind. It had helped with her questioning his apathetic nature during the vigil. the words of prayer were all a blur now that Fire'light sense a broken spirit inside him. Her mind focused on the spoken prophecy a while back. She thought that the clans had finally got their act together, and that Spider'stalk and Rusty'claw were destined to end Storm'strike's tyranny, as it is known that most of his members have died during the collapse.

Her heart beaten with worry and doubt. She couldn't just cast him out of the clan now that he had found his heart. But she could see Web'star's warning during the meeting with SunClan's spirits. She also had to keep a close eye on her own blood, now seemingly distrusted by her. She glances at Sun'star who noticed her expression changing. A flicker of light is seen above clouds, where their father was calling for them. Fire'light felt her fur protruding,

she immediately got up and ran to the forest unheard. Her paws were quiet to not cause any disruption, but Spider'stalk's eyes have caught her running into the thick leaves of the bushes.

"...Where's she going?" Asked the warrior, turning to his uncle who was focused on the funeral. Dusk'prowl's eyes shifted at the sunrise's daughter. "What do you mean?" He bluntly responded. "That she-kitty is always up to something." He grumbles, his eyes narrowing at the sight of her. "Always?" Spider'stalk stares at him, he was puzzled. "You **knew** her?"

"I've joined a group that has been rampant in these lands. You think I don't know these cats?"

"No-...!?" Spider'stalk quickly lowers his head, wanting to rephrase his words. "It just sounds like you knew her way before. I have a feeling there's history."

Dusk'prowl looked away for a moment, the resemblance was stinging him from the inside and out. He could feel the winds of a crow's wings circling above them. He didn't know if he was ready to tell the truth, holding the secret back was going to hurt him on the long run. "There are echoes in the past, Spider'stalk, some that are louder than others." His uncle said. " They aren't meant to be chased, but to reflect and move forward. Find a better path than what I've chosen." His words were silently pleading the tom. "Please." He nuzzled his nose against his forehead.

"I won't." Spider'stalk mewed, feeling his youth coming back to him. "I'm a warrior at heart; I've already found a path. I won't disappoint you."

"You've never did." Dusk'prowl nudges him. "You're a good cat, you know that?"

Spider'stalk leaning close to him and purred in response. His tail swaying joyfully, imagining the moment he had first met his uncle as an energetic kit. This was one of the good memories he had, cherished close to his heart. He could cry thinking about it until now. He had forgotten what adventures he and Dusk'prowl had gone together behind Jeffrey's back.

Meanwhile, his eyes gazes at the same black avian, now hiding in the shadows.

Chapter **34**

Across the territory, lived a spiteful, rumbling storm.

The rogues grieved of another fellow cat, as they have been quiet for a very long time.

To lose a trusted companion was enough, but to the entire plan that he's been patiently waiting was worse. It led to many questions, some even wondered if being a rogue is worth it. He couldn't escape from what happened in the past, the cried of his loved ones burning alive in the inferno in front of him, the **eyes of the sunset** observing from the distance, who did **nothing** to stop the burning. He scrambled the ruins in hopes of saving his kits, but in the end his hopes of finding a new purpose were all futile.

He hasn't been in the picture, although he had waited the right time to break the territory from the inside and out. Many things have gotten in the way that destroyed his entire plan, lack of prey, lack of warriors, and sickness that made everything fall apart. To put even more salt in the wound, Cherry'fang hadn't returned like he wanted to, not even Rusty'claw. All that work he's done to help them, and look where that got him? Nowhere.

He sat in the middle of the dry clearing as the dust stained his gray mattered fur. The anger was still evident now that the cats he trusted never came back to him. They thought he was a tree that blocked their way to victory. They even found their own peace in their chaotic lives and ditched before him, they found family, a purpose to live, and moved on before **him.** The only peace he has ever gotten, is the wind of a forgotten soul that comforted the lonely. She was only remembered by the rogue leader, who he thought to have never find solace again, took in the lost spirit under his large paws that were made for killing, only to comfort the young and suffering.

A white dove fly above him, the wind didn't intimidate her as she

landed in front of him. The white aura surrounded the avian, who transformed into a small, apprentice-sized cinnamon tortie. She wasn't able to vocalize, but her white, tearful eyes were shown clearly to the rogue, who couldn't help but to lower his head to nuzzle the ghost by her forehead. "How can they do this to **you**, little one?" Storm'strike murmured as he continued to nuzzle her like father and daughter. "How can he leave your memory like **this**?"

The wind was soft, and quiet. The ghost is at ease to the physical affection of what an unlikely friend she had made. Her eyes briefly closed as she felt his nose tickle her small face. She moved next to him, her head nudging his hip as she lies down. The rogue was rather puzzled of her movement, but he never hesitated. He was even eager to play with the ghost, forgetting his occupation of a leader for a second. She purred, knowing that she wasn't going to be alone, although her fears never left. The ghost mewed to the rogue, begging him not to continue with the plan. But it didn't seem like he was listening to her. **This** was something he should've been planning from the start, **this** should've encouraged him to get his family back and avenge them.

"I can't let our legacy go to waste." He began, his voice left harsh and cold. His purring turned into a low, ominous murmur. "They left you, they left me, why should I let go of what they've did to **us?**"

The ghost quickly shook her head, her vocal sounds and groans were trying to convince him, the tears rolling down her muzzle, fearing of what will come of Storm'strike's ambitions and plans.

"No." The rogue stood from his spot, staring out to the green clearing in front of him. His thoughts were growing more unstable, the memories of the fire caused him to act erratically. "You cannot stop their **destiny**, isn't what they originally asked from us? Little kitty I know you seek vengeance from the sunset leaving **you.**" The cracks of his sclera were appearing as he became more power-hungry, his longing memory pushing him into the deepest depths of insanity. The loss of the past blinded him. He wasn't going to fail no longer. "I'm doing what's right, to take what they've stolen from **me.**"

"**No!**" The ghost cried to the rogue, she pressed against his body, wanting to hold him down and comfort him as how much he had comforted her in the past. The tom was strong enough to shrug him off, but she wasn't going down without a fight. Her body went with the wind, the white streak surrounded him body and whispered into his ears as he moved his limbs and began to walk. Storm'strike was finding hard to continue, he couldn't move without her grip holding him back.

A furry, tingling sensation was felt from his two front paws, the feeling of a kit's fur, and the iron scent of blood coming from his late sons after being found in the rubble. His fur had the feeling of being poked at from the debris of the collapsing home that surrounded him. The voices that taunted him in every way, the pain of his scars being torn on his body coming from the clan members that disregarded his feelings. The scar on his eye stung, the world was now spinning around him.

"**Leave me alone, let me be, let me achieve!**" The rogue cried to the skies, the wind hitting his face, the ears of the ghost's pleading was torturing him from the inside and out. "**I'm doing this for us! Please! I'm doing this for my family!**" He yelled at the complete darkness that surrounded him, the tears escaped his eyes as the distressed calls continued for what felt like an eternity. His paws swiped the air in disobedience, he hissed at the voices until his rage had taken over.

"**STOP!**" He finally screamed; the voices were scared off. It was now quiet.

The trees stopped creaking; the leaves remained stagnant. All he was left is the remnants of the wind, until it was all finally over. The sun had fully set, he was left in the middle of the dry lands. He was facing at the ledge that split the boundaries between the rogues and the clans, his focus never wavered. He heard a bark behind him, his head quickly turned to Sully who was now standing. The dog heard his descent to madness, which piqued his curiosity.

Storm'strike could read the dog's expression, his pupils focused onto the ledge.

"Sully." He began in a balefully calm voice.

"**Bring your pack and start off with TerraClan.**" He ordered. "Do not spare **anyone.**"

Sully murmured with approval; his tail wagged as he runs back to the other side of the territory where the two-legs have lived.

This was going to be the start for Storm'strike, and what he should've done moons ago.

Chapter **35**

With guilt, Cherry'fang knew what could happen at any moment. She bailed out on the rogues to protect herself. Now, it just feels like there's no choice. The cracking of the dead leaves fell before her. Her eyes flickered the color of scarlet red, sensing a warning close to the territory.

The forest had become deathly quiet, and her ears moved carefully to the noise of silence and paranoia. She tracked the noises of the nocturnal prey. Her sharp pupils shifting at each movement that is made, she drags herself off of the dirt, ready to patrol the territory if needed. She leaves some of the warriors to protect the young and vulnerable in their respective dens. The medicine cat, Wood'bark, is finding it hard to keep up with everything. He couldn't help but feel suspicious of her. The paranoia is too much to bear after the death of Yellow'petal, and the battle that took place. With voices from the former leader and the moment of silence that stuck with him for moons, he had to do something. He had to stop the prophecy from happening in the wrong paws.

Seeing her exit the shared warrior and apprentice den, he dropped all of his duties to confront her. His striped body trailed towards her; his fast movement bothered the she-cat now that he blocked her way from leaving. "What are you doing?" Cherry'fang steps away, now staring at her brother.

"I **know** what you and Rusty'claw did to **Web'star**." He says, catching eyes of other cats who overheard his words. The medicine cat is confident enough to make a call out. Cherry'fang's eyes widened at the statement. "What do you mean? There hasn't been any evidence about him for the longest. Are you out of your mind?" The she-cat began to make some conclusions, just to force the blame on to the ginger tom. "I never done anything to hurt you all."

"You're lying." Wood'bark eases closer, snarling at her. "How can they prophesize a murderer to save **our** clan? How can SunClan let you go free with no consequences?"

"You ask them!" Cherry'fang snapped, seeing the cats exiting their dens to observe the argument. All eyes were on her, and her heart boomed like the large paws on the dirt of an agitated bear. She wanted to run and never look back. "I've yet to do anything to hurt you all! Are you out of your mind!?" She shouts. "Don't you lie to me!" Wood'bark's claws unsheathes, preparing himself to pounce on her. It only took a matter of seconds for a warrior to intervene before things were going to get bloody.

"Cut it out!" Badger'snap raises his voice, running between the paranoid medicine cat and the warrior. "You will not hurt each other! The Sunrise and Sunset does not want you to fight!" He scolded, defensively batting Wood'bark's head. In response, he hisses at the black tom and swipes his paw threatingly at him. "You're taking her side!? She is working for those who will want to see us fall!"

"She's your sister." Badger'snap glares at him, dismissing his concern. "A medicine cat should know better than this. You always let SunClan's judgment decide her fate. Not you or the leader."

"Then they must be mouse-brained if they let the cat who conspired Web'star's death to be our savior! I will not let her or Rusty'claw destroy us! They've made a horrible decision!" Wood'bark cries to the warrior, his eyes swollen of tears from the constant nightmares. He was tired of letting things go. Instead, he had to retaliate out of his own fear and morals. But what he saw changed him forever. As a large shadow emerges from the bushes, canines that reflected off the moonlight, the heavy steps of the beast breaking into the clan and marking their teeth on Badger'snap's fur in a quick moment.

"**SCAVENGERS!**" A cat cried, and others immediately retreated the camp as dogs poured in.

The blood splattered in front of Cherry'fang and Wood'bark's face. The immediate fear of the raid was right, Wood'bark had no choice but to let his sister run off, as he dealt with the danger around them. He quickly ran to the dens where the apprentices and kits lived, and to where the dogs were mostly targeting, he screamed on the top of his lungs.

"**RUN TO BLAZECLAN! DO NOT TURN BACK!**"

The queens and elders were quick to grab the kits, but some did not make it as one dog got ahold of Owl'kit. Dove'poppy saw her kit, and willingly ran at the dog, headbutting the canine to the ground, and letting her injured kit be free of its jaws. The other punctured its teeth onto the skin of the queen's neck, killing her. Her kits were left in distraught seeing their mother being dragged away, they couldn't stay for long now that the apprentices, Bear'paw and White'paw had led them away to the camp. Fir'paw had to run off with them, deserting what was left of the herbs in the den.

The warriors, such as Thicket'fur, and Fox'snout had fought hard. Thicket'fur leapt on top of one of the dogs faces, potentially blinding them in the use of his claws. Fox'snout, the unlikely hero, fought two of them off from reaching to the elder's den. Unfortunately, one dog bit his shoulder, the others pressing the poor tom down on the ground, gripping his fur and shaking him like a toy. The elders were left to watch the warrior being killed in front of them. They were given the opportunity to escape when the warrior had distracted them.

The blood staining the grounds of what used to be known as TerraClan. The tragedy that struck the clan that didn't expect their enemy to begin his reign of terror. Cats were injured; some were unlucky to be killed during the act. The dogs made sure that everything of what was left of the clan and SunClan itself, was destroyed. The dens, the shrine, the herbs that were thrown away, Sully had ruled the pack with an iron fist, it was a request that the Storm had made to weaken the territory.

The voice of Wood'bark followed the escaping members, leaving the bloodbath of their camp. His hip poured blood from the deep wound, trailing all the way close to the watering hole, where the vigil took place. BlazeClan's warriors heard the desperate screams of help, Cedar'star and the deputy, Spruce'leap instantly recognized the voices of their warriors. The leader's eyes went into worry, and quickly left, making her way to the bleeding medicine cat. The vigil had abruptly stopped, now that the terror had officially began.

"Good SunClan!" She exclaimed, running towards Wood'bark who

collapsed onto a bloody puddle that a dog has made of him. The weeping Fir'paw had pressed his paws above his weakened body. "They've killed our cats!" He screamed. "The dogs!" He gestures his paws onto the deep greenery of the forest. In everyone's ears, can be heard of dogs barking and howling. The cats that willingly stayed and left to die. "**NO**!" Sun'star ran to his brother's body, wasting no time, his paws pressing against the wound to keep the blood from pouring. He couldn't think straight, with so many unnecessary deaths, and now his own **brother** bleeding in front of him.

"Get Smoke'shade!" He yowls to the cats, the tears instantly falling from his swollen eyes. His heart raced as he began to panic from the fear of losing his brother, his kin. "**NOW!**"

The warriors left to go and get Smoke'shade, leaving Sun'star to wail, and the refugees to live in constant paranoia now that they have lost their camp, their home. The vigil was put to an end.

There were no signs of Cherry'fang after she ran. It was like as if she had already been exiled from camp. She stopped midway at the borders, staring at the desolate lands before her. The eyes of the ancestors were now watching. The sunrise, who had saw his daughter holding great power onto her paws, now seeing her as a threat to the family, and the territories.

But there were more to come, and more to lose. **The territory will burn over the death of a loved one.**

Chapter **36**

This had been the longest night since those deaths have occurred, from one, to three, to many more that can happen at any moment. Spider'stalk struggled sleeping, even to the point that he wasn't even able to close his eyes. He had pushed everything to the side as if it was all in the past. He even struggled trying to accept the fact he had killed a non-clan cat, who still had a soul, and a family to go back. He could never forgive himself for what he had done that night. The voices of the BloodClan cat urged him to listen, and that danger is lurking. The memory of **Jade** is still fresh, maybe she wasn't lying after all.

Those harsh times gave same treatment to Onyx'foot and Monty, who was now forced to stay in the den since the dogs had taken over. Cats of WaveClan stayed up late, now hearing about the attack that happened just an hour ago. It left the clan with unease; their eyes were now focused on Spider'stalk and Rusty'claw. They didn't bat an eye at Dusk'prowl who was lying next to his nephew during this time. He had no word in this by the law of SunClan. He was even fortunate they didn't decide to chase him out.

He couldn't take it anymore being in the same place, while hearing the sharing tongues of other warriors and queens outside of the den. The voice of Onyx'foot and Monty had made him agitated. His tail thudded against stone floors, trying to find a simple coping matter during this time. "I can't believe what had just happened." Monty spoke, his eyes appeared to be angry in a way, he didn't know how to take that information. "They've did some unimaginable damage to the clan. A kit was even found without a **head**."

"Don't speak of that." A warrior, Cloud'pool interrupts Monty. "It's going to make me sick just from imagining."

"It's that **rogue**, I say." Needle'whisker murmurs to her nephew, glaring at Dusk'prowl in the corner. "He's got his friends killing us!" She shouts out her words on purpose, causing a complete ruckus inside the cave that quickly turns Spider'stalk's attention away. His uncle's brows furrowed. "It wasn't my doing to let the dogs go rampant in TerraClan." He growls at her, seeing the she-cat boldly approach him in a way that is supposed to make him feel smaller. "You were associated with the brutal killings of **Crow'stalk** and Web'star, how should **I** believe your words!?" She hovers her face, she was close enough to break his bubble and make him feel uncomfortable.

"Take a step further and I'll make you regret it." Dusk'prowl snarls at him, his arms defensively put in front of Spider'stalk to protect him. "I had **no** choice; you don't know the full story."

"It's all in front of me!" The she-cat snapped, some of the warriors began to exit the den when the environment became tense. Onyx'foot didn't know what to do, he just stood there with his maw dropped to the floor. His eyes staring at Spider'stalk, spotting the greenery bleeding onto the pupils of his yellow eyes. The black cat's muscles began to writhe and crack at the moment Needle'whisker got **too** close. "Your nephew won't be a replacement to what we've lost in the past! Maybe he's got your blood of violence and destruction!" She yells at his face, berating him.

"Stop with the argument already!" Lily'flight intervenes, now moving in front of the angered she-cat. "You are no **savior** if you're yelling at his face like that!"

"What are you doing!? He's the one that killed your mate! A father that Poppy'paw has lost because of **him**!" Needle'whisker yowls at the she-cat, her fangs sharpening from the stress that was made of her. Lily'flight could feel the grief coming to her again, but she couldn't be weak and let his death take over her. "You need to let Emerald'glare and **I** handle this on our own!" The tears fell and created a small stream on the ground. "You are not the savior of this clan!" She repeats the phrase, now attempting to block her off.

"Get away from me!" Needle'whisker swipes her paws at the she-cat. "Let me teach him a lesson!"

Cats began to erupt and run out of their spots to hold Needle'whisker down before things got ugly. Dusk'prowl stood his ground, protecting his nephew from the angered she-cat. Spider'stalk's claws began to unsheathe, his pupils darting at each warrior as the voice of **Scourge** grew louder than before. Screaming in his mind to do something, stand up for the only blood that he has left in this cruel world.

Needle'whisker pushed every cat aside, raising her sharp claws to attack the rogue. Dusk'prowl had his claws ready to retaliate, and his back legs preparing to pounce at her while screeching.

Immediately, Spider'stalk emerged from his uncle's grip, latching onto the warrior with unsheathed claws grazing both of her shoulders, spitting and hissing. A streak of green light left his body as he pushed the warrior across the medium-sized cave, nearly pushing her towards the lit crystals, and possibly scraping a skin off her pelt. His strong back legs made him leap close to the she-cat's face, wanting to bite her. But the damage was done when she slipped and fell onto her side, the cats moved out of the way before they were crushed by the she-cat.

The tom fell onto the floor, a hint of blood was left on his paws. His ears rang, his small body flinched from the adrenaline that caused his body to shudder and muscles pulsing to his possessor's actions of retaliation. He panted heavily, his eyes watering from the colors of green tears of frustration. He could barely say anything, but to stare at the terrified she-cat. He was hurting cats again, the cats that he had nothing to do with them. The cats that he had proved his loyalty for, now turning around just for him to harm them.

The best thing he could do until things had gotten worse, is to run. His small legs picked up the speed, running out to the entrance, leaving many others to call his name.

Those thoughts went rampant onto his mind when ran out of that cave.

The waves of the drowning place wetted his back, the berating of his father that shamed him for running away from the mistakes he had made. The crumbling waves of a storm that appeared above

him as the burning drops of rain turns into blood and staining his fur. He found himself running across the forest yelping as the large leaves of the trees morphed into many duplicates of his father, running at him and clawing the leaves as they leapt on one tree to the next. He could see Lee staring at the tom passing by, as his sister sat next to the tom, glaring angrily at him.

His heart couldn't stop racing, it was like a prey trying to run from an imaginary predator who lurked in the skies, taking in the form of a murder of crows.

The questions ran to his mind, and that he wished he truly knew who **he** was. The cat he has been compared to for the longest. But looking back at the past had stung his scars, the voices of hatred and agitation from his clanmates made him believe that he wasn't going to be good at anything, or maybe he'll turn out like his uncle. His eyes were blurry, he stares into the skies where millions of eyes took place as the stars, and that they were watching him. He screamed as those eyes followed him around, watching every step he takes.

His chest had a sharp pain when he runs close to the cliff above the drowning place without noticing. There were feelings of denial and self-hatred as to why he was now acting like this. **Was this out of throwing a fit? Was this out of a petty disagreement?** He couldn't understand why, or what was happening. His arms were heavy from holding the ginger tom back as the debris crushed his brother alive, leaving him devastated. The screams were hurting his head and caused the tom to collapse on the ground, ending his abrupt running when he finds a cliff in front of him.

"**Spider'stalk? SPIDER'STALK**!"

The tom founds himself on his back, his eyes half-lidded as he saw the light settling in above him. His body is cold, like a rotten prey. His breathing stops, and his mind and soul had already made peace on the solid ground. His body rocking back in forth now that he saw himself floating onto the water as those feelings drains out like blood. His eyes fluttered slowly, seeing a silhouette of a cat standing above him. He could recognize her scent and voice of a friend who he helped in the past. The light disappears, now that he

found himself floating on the surface of the blue waves. Ghost'breeze had dragged his nearly unconscious body close to the shores, Spider'stalk was still panicky and that he accidentally claws her while being carried.

"**Get off of me!**" He yowls. "**Let me go!**" His arms swiveled everywhere, trying to bat the SunClan warrior away. His eyes faded back to yellow as he gained conscience of himself.

"Stop! I'm not letting you die!" Ghost'breeze grip became tighter, she throws him onto the sandy shore. The water got inside of the tom's maw, he jumps out of the water to cough and spit out the remaining water. He found himself underneath the ledge of the borders that WaveClan and BreezeClan shared. His ears were flattened, he hisses at the she-cat, attempting to distance himself for a moment. The SunClan warrior was displeased of what he was doing, she attempts to get close with him, hoping to calm him down.

"What is up with you? Why did you run off?" She approaches him, with her paws touching his shoulder. Spider'stalk quickly bats her away once again. His body quivered from the cold feeling of the windy air after being in the water. The new scars on his body were fresh, and that stung and irritated his fur. He breathed heavily, trying to find himself again. The cat that he had almost lost underwater. "Don't push me away!" Ghost'breeze snaps at him, her eyes began to tear up, seeing him suffer. "Tell me, what's going on?"

He couldn't keep his maw shut no longer; his paws were buried under the sand to keep himself from snapping at her. The scars throbbed in pain; the particles of sand stung the open wounds.

"Who-..." He began. "Who-... is he? Why do they **keep** comparing me to him?"

"You're not like him." Ghost'breeze denied of that explanation. Her face softening from hearing Spider'stalk speak, but she was still unsure if this was really the best choice. "They can say whatever they want to, you're just you. A name couldn't affect them that badly."

"Then why am I the one to suffer for his past? What have **I** done?" A hint of anger grew in the aching chest of what used to be the kind and curious cat that used to live as a Softpaw. Even what he was two moons ago is different than the one that Ghost'breeze is standing in front of now. She didn't know what to say, or what to think. Her maw quivered at the thought of those words that had hurt Spider'stalk in the long run. "I... don't know." She shakes her head. "But I know that none of this matter to you. You can't just let yourself go like that. Please." Ghost'breeze pleaded, the tears wetting the sandy dirt.

Spider'stalk's eyes narrowed at her words. He didn't know if it sounded believable in his ears. She was his friend after all, but he didn't know if he could trust her.

"Let's... just not talk about this, **anymore.**" She purrs, nudging her head towards him. "I can take you to the medicine den if needed." She stands on her four legs, her eyes gesturing at the tunnel on the right side. Spider'stalk's eyes shifted from side to side, he was feeling strangely uncomfortable if this was something he could just get over. He was still acting jittery and is barely breathing. But he couldn't deny her trying to help.

This is friend, he couldn't harm her like he harmed everyone else.

"Okay." He speaks, now following her out of the area.

His mind reflecting what had happened earlier, and now that he has to get over it. For the sake of the prophecy.

Chapter **37**

She died hours after the vigil.

Rusty'claw observed his mother's body lying lifelessly in front of him. Her soul had found solace, and joined her son when her heart couldn't handle losing him. Her last words were stuck onto her youngest son's mind when she had finally taken her last breath.

"**I see him.**"

It's all the tom had ever heard of her, and soon she departed the lands as a star hidden in the thick, dark-gray clouds. The tom had no tears left now that Yellow'petal's death had sucked him dry. He didn't know what to feel at the moment, it's like he had stopped being himself, or anyone. There were no obnoxious rants about him and his relation to Firestar, no snarky remarks that he uses to express himself, he is just an empty vessel of a tom who had completely lost control of his life.

The ominous chattering appeared outside of the dark medicine den; he could tell there was going to be a meeting about him. He turns his head, hearing the meeting call of Sun'star, who didn't look well after last night. "If you are old enough to run underneath the flames of the sun, gather beneath the sun rock for a meeting!" He yowls, silencing the cats that has been sharing tongues about the new refugees. The den was packed with them, getting the received care from Smoke'shade and both medicine apprentices. Wood'bark is left sitting below the rock, with wet moss covering his poultice filled wounds. His eyes glaring at Rusty'claw who exited the den and joined with the crowd.

"I have made a decision with the spirits high above. We were given a testimony that **Rusty'claw** was part of Web'star's murder."

The news had sent shockwaves, most gasped of fear and shock,

some who knew that the ginger had skeletons hidden under his paws. All eyes were now on Rusty'claw, that he wished, but never thought it'll be for that exact reason. He stands up and walked forward, staring at what used to be his mentor in the past. "I am guilty." he admits, causing more shock to those who didn't think he'll take the blame. "...so is your sister." He added.

"Oh, we **know** she's next." Wood'bark remarked, his paws dragging across the ground. "But you have caused irreparable damage to the territory. You've even had our kits killed! There's no use in denying this."

"But your leaders up and above, they are the reason to the Saviors' wrongdoings." His voice grew louder. "**Destiny** is nothing but poison to our clans." Rusty'claw's claws gripped the earth below him, his tail lashing with irritation in fault of the medicine cat's words. The wildcat still didn't take the tom seriously. "You still killed a leader for your own greed!" Wood'bark's voice echoed across the camp's clearing. "You have nothing to speak for him, when you're the one who **failed** him." His eyes dilated at Rusty'claw's movement. He didn't trust him then, now he has a reason not to.

"Do not fight under the presence of SunClan. This is no fighting matter, and that we should let this be over with." Sun'star took a few steps forward, standing on the rock where the sun can shine on his back. The shame that burdened him as he stared at Rusty'claw for the last time, his apprentice that he hoped will be a better cat than before. But the truth hurts, and he had no choice but to follow the code, and let justice be served.

Before he could say anything, Rusty'claw interrupts him.

"Are you serious?" The ginger tom snaps. "After all this time I've done to improve myself, this is how you'll do this... to **me!?**" His sharp ears flattened; a growl builds up from his throat, seeing the warriors that he grew up with, standing against him. His eyes watered when seeing the ghosts of SunClan watching above him, the eyes of the **five** that has been largely disappointed of his actions. Maybe this was all just trick, a **cruel** trick. His eyes widened in fear, now seeing those green eyes of a ginger tom that

he idolized for a long time. The lost ghost of the former StarClan staring at his ancestor and turning his back on him. All those times preventing him were still a loss at the end.

The fog took over the camp as the clouds rumbled, Rusty'claw found himself under a trial of a lifetime, a trial for his innocence, and that he is far from it. "You give me no choice." Sun'star's voice broke, seeing the tom as a scared kit who was lost after his own father left him. He could barely start without finding himself in a small puddle of tears. His heart slowly beating when he saw his brother's furious glare. He needed to get this meeting over with, for the better of the clan and the safety of the territory.

"From now on, you are **forbidden** to enter the premises of our clan." He spoke in a calm voice to control his grieving soul for what he saw as a son for the first time. "If you are caught roaming, I will give no hesitation for the other clans to **kill you off**." His voice went deadly quiet, and hoarse at the last moment. He was still angry for what he did and hid for many moons. The ginger tom just stood there, emotionlessly staring at what used to be his father. He found himself in the middle of a humiliation ritual. His ears peaking at every noise, every chatter, every movement. The world had spun around him, darkening and draining every life force that he had found himself in.

The skies faded to black, the cats had disappeared, and his fur had grown cold. He had lost the two cats that were close to him, and now he was losing **everything.**

His body got numb, all he ever heard is the shouting of the warriors who had thrown him away like crow-food.

He found himself lying on the ground of an unknown territory, staring out in the clouds. The thick bushes covered the entirety of the forest, the only light source came from the sun behind those clouds. He found peace in the silence that the environment had given him. The skies were prettier in the presence of his mother and brother's spirit. The clouds took in the shape of the two cats that found themselves weeping for him. The rain began to start, and wet the tom's fur, who he did nothing to even commit to a basic task now.

This was it; this is how he's supposed to go. There was no fighting back, he'll find himself into the eternal darkness where the corrupt lives.

He hears a call from a similar cat, his raspy voice emerging between the thick trees. The storm roars from his presence, and the rain had gotten heavier. he turns his head, seeing him for the first time in a few moons.

"**Rusty'claw.**"

"Storm'strike?"

Chapter **38**

(Honestly this story has so much lore stretched out into nearly fifty-ish chapters, so this chapter and the next one is going to be quite long due to it being the rising action.)

Just about a **few sunrises** later is where things had **finally** turned the tide.

With nightmares so endless, he couldn't be trusted to be out and about like the other warriors. Emerald'glare, warned about the prophecy falling into ruins, he had to do what is necessary to keep him safe in the paws of his uncle standing right beside him to the very end. But it felt wrong, Dusk'prowl hated to keep him imprisoned in what was supposed to be his home. It had already been too late now that Spider'stalk had found himself in an isolated space that served as the purgatory. He was running from a pack of scavengers and rogue cats with large fangs that could bite off a piece of bark from a tree. He could hear the voice of his uncle who was screaming for him as he jumped through the thick leaves, and the clouds rumbling above him.

"**Run! Run! Do not look back**!" His frightful voice lingered onto his mind as the poor young warrior's legs picked up speed. Those canines were biting close to his tail, he had to quickly make a sharp turn, leading them falling onto the thorny field below the ledge. He followed the dirt trail leading to the cliff above the marsh lands of where the voice of his uncle led him to believe where Spider'stalk could find him. The grass was sharp enough to cut through his paws, he yelped when the pain struck his sensitive pads underneath.

He found himself spraining his paws as he slips down the hill. The small quills opened up the old scars from the past and even created new ones when falling all the way to the bottom where he is now

standing on a cliff, surrounded by tall trees and a red sun peeking through the thick stormy clouds. Spider'stalk's nostrils were runny, he mewled in pain trying to move without the quills ripping his back. It was like torture trying to escape the inevitable darkness that took over what was left of the territory, or that he knows of.

He looks into the skies, seeing that the fog was finally moving out of the way, it revealed an old, desolate piece of land that has been thrown away for generations. He looks at the tall, white-tipped mountains behind him, and then the bloodied camp of an old clan that lived in the swamp but was shattered by a leader who was a firm believer of StarClan, he only used his beliefs for his own gain. Spider'stalk called his uncle's name, hoping that he could respond to him back.

"Dusk'prowl, **Dusk'prowl?**"

There was nothing, only the winds and the trees that resembled large two-legs that stared down at him. There were voices from each side, Spider'stalk was beginning to panic now that he truly had nowhere to go. He stops at a large silhouette of a cat hovering over him, those crimson eyes that could be seen as wicked from down below the light of SunClan. His heart stopped, as well as his breathing that leaves his maw. He froze at the presence of the sunset who had found the tom standing before him. The grounds trembled as the sun gleamed ominously; his aura bled the skies.

Then, the territory goes black, finding himself sleeping inside the medicine den early in the morning. He takes his first breath for the first time as he found himself bumping into Dusk'prowl. His body feels cold now that his scars were taken care of in the use of cobwebs and moss with a mix of poultice to heal him. "Woah... woah!" Dusk'prowl held out his paws. "Easy there. I don't want you to tear your wounds again." He lowers his voice. "Just breathe, you'll be alright."

The tom's body shuddered under the paws of his uncle, he practiced his slow breathing, and his vision returning to him after that night where he had run off. He begged her for the answers, yet she gave him nothing, and that frustrated him to the core, and that he couldn't just let everything go with the wind. He closes his eyes,

before turning his head to ask his uncle. "Tell me who '**Crow'stalk**' is." He bluntly asks, his paws standing on the cold ground. Dusk'prowl nearly choked on himself, his eyes glancing at his nephew who begged an answer out of him. "What?"

Spider'stalk was getting ready to snap him, but he remained hesitant. His eyes softening at the disturbed expression his uncle made "Please?" He requested; his patience was running low. He could feel himself crumbling from the inside as he saw those feared glares of the warriors outside of the den who had took a peek in there. Dusk'prowl couldn't help but to feel those memories that made his body sore. His eyes drenched in small tears just from that name. "I... don't know if we should talk about this in here, **Sunflower**." He admitted. "It's hard."

"I know." Said the young tom. "But I **don't** understand what I've done to **them**." He looks at the ground, the tears escaping his eyes. "Onyx'foot had barely spoke to me after I tried to-..."

"I **know** that." His uncle cuts him off, his baggy eyes were swollen from the constant cries. "I thought I was going to **lose** you." He briefly presses his head against Spider'stalk. "We can talk, if you want. You haven't been the best since the collapse." Dusk'prowl purred, he had become so overprotective that he even poked glares at Needle'whisker who watched.

No one isn't going to go after his nephew, **no one**.

Finding relief of the situation, Spider'stalk purrs back at his uncle, nuzzling him. "Just this once," He repeated. ".. just this once."

On top of the ledge where they sat and spoke together during the vigil, the sun was shining brightly again. Spider'stalk had forgotten how much he enjoyed of being a warrior. His free will of running across the territory had fell off after the prophecy was now announced. He couldn't be trusted out of the territory, so he had to sneak out with his uncle who had found an alternate way, just for him to breathe in the air of freedom again. The prophecy had confined him into a personal prison of dreams that he was forced to

let go, and a purpose that has been driven to the ground. Everyone was now avoiding him and leaving the tom to fend those demons for himself, but not while he is alone.

He has his uncle; it's the best thing a cat could ask for.

The waves crashed behind them, as the wind traveled below the light blue skies, and the white clouds that were like pillows from the two-leg nests. Something the two had deeply craved for a bit.

"So," His uncle began. "You want to hear about **Crow'stalk**." He asks, the young warrior nodded in desperate curiosity. He gave Dusk'prowl a minute to settle himself, the memories that vividly appeared in his mind. "He may be a random cat to you, but to us he is known as a myth and a legend in the forests. An unlikely hero matched by his ego but pressured to follow his fate that caused him to lose himself and fall from a cliff just moons after the battle of the rogues and WaveClan."

Spider'stalk listened to the story carefully, the questions were saved for later, but that only depends.

"He had humble beginnings, lived as a loner who had a hopeful future despite being the runt of his litter, he had the energy of a clan cat, but the clan was rather hesitant about letting him join, at first. But when the rogues took over the barn, his father had no choice but to give his youngest kit away in fear of getting him killed."

"Fortunately, the **sunset** took him in and was responsible for his training from apprentice to warrior." Dusk'prowl looks up to the sky where his eyes narrowed at the sun. Spider'stalk appeared to be intrigued at the story so far, maybe this was the reason why those red eyes have been following him for all this time?

"With a privilege to have a spirit mentor him, he became egotistic, and maybe even a troublemaker if that's how the elders described him." There was a hint of humor in Dusk'prowl's voice, until it changed back to his neutral tone. "Nevertheless, his arrogance never shadowed his morals. He had always learned to care for others, a habit he grown into since his days as a loner. His presence only

sparked some jealousy of one who sought vengeance for the clans after the death of his family." His eyes went dull, he could hear voices, and visions of the gruesomeness that was shown in front of him.

The clouds were dark gray, and the waters rushed against the shores at the water that were stained red. Claws were unsheathed, and scars were given. The pooling of one's body spewed blood across the sandy grounds, all in the hands of the brutality that Dew'star haven't seen before in his lifetime. Even Web'belly had to step aside, watching as the crows soared the cats, leaving a deadly mark of what had become the bloodiest battle.

"That battle over territory, triggered one of the greatest fights that occurred between both sides. **Crow'stalk** had shown another side of him that day." He shakes his head. "He left the fearsome leader a scar as a burning reminder."

"He-..." Spider'stalk paused, thinking of a word to describe the mysterious tom. "He sounds unfriendly."

"You're saying the obvious." Dusk'prowl rolled his eyes, his tail curling up when seeing his nephew's face that he found was funny. "You shouldn't really be afraid; he's the reason that WaveClan had won that battle that day." He gently nudges his nephew with his nose again, until his pupils began to wander when getting deep into the story. "He had lived a good life after the battle, with the clan on his side, a mate from TerraClan who is expecting, and granted the role of deputy after Dew'star's tragic death."

"However, there was a lot of responsibility that he had to handle. Nearly having the clan just at the top of his claws, he had to climb paths of hardship just to get what he needed to provide for the clan, and his small family... until-" He pauses, his face hardening at that moment. "What?" Spider'stalk tilts his head, the wind moving against the moss stuck onto his body. "He was given a prophecy that went after his family, and the little one." Dusk'prowl's voice quivered, his body shifting from discomfort. "His duties of being deputy were a handful, the warriors often pressured him to follow his **destiny** so the territory wouldn't follow what has happened in the past with **Little'shine**."

"I've heard her before!" Spider'stalk cuts him off just a split second after recognizing the story his friend had told him long ago. "She-... she was suffering from that too. I couldn't believe what they had treat her." His voice cracked, he remembered the words all too well, it intrigues Dusk'prowl that he even knew the story from the ancient times. "Their stories matched too well, but with different outcomes. **Crow'stalk** had done the unthinkable to avoid such fate that will happen to his family, and the stress that came with the **Sunset** begging him to listen. Even the clan was beginning to despise him when he became more hesitant of things and neglected his job. The tom was grief-stricken that he had found himself in the middle of the inevitable that created his gifted life into fear and paranoia."

Dusk'prowl fell silent for what he wanted to say next.

"That night during an argument with Web'star, he had enough and ran out of that cave and disappeared into the night. A kit snuck out of BlazeClan and found his body floating on the waves shortly after."

He stares out to the forests in front of him as if he was reminiscing a crowd of warriors searching for him through the starless night. The panicked voices were unforgettable. Spider'stalk froze at the story, finding familiarity to what he had done that night. The memories were too clear, too real. The visions of cats and crows chasing him down, they were malevolent. They had a desire of wanting to drive him down into the wrong path, and that intimidated him. "He died?" Spider'stalk asked, the tears welling from his eyes. The empathy returning to him when he could fully imagine the feeling of hopelessness the former deputy had suffered.

Dusk'prowl nodded, his eyes narrowed again, he had spotted something below them that awfully had the smell of a scavenger. "No one couldn't reason why he had done what he did. A lot of believe that he had died along with his mate who had disappeared shortly after. His death left the clans in anger and took it as betrayal for what is left to come in the future. Web'star's death is a sign that the end times are **near**. Not one cat could replace what was left of **Crow'stalk** until it's far too late. A **destiny** that has been shattered by fear."

"But-..." Spider'stalk subtly moved his maw, pondering about the stories of exaggeration of what other warriors had made up about the mysterious warrior. "I've must've been chosen for a reason, right?" The tom looks up at him, his ears flickering at the sound of constant rustling behind the bushes. His heart quickened with its beating; his eyes flickered the color of green when spotting the eyes of the beast that ravaged the camp. His ears rang, his tail pointed upwards, spotting the same dog that he had seen back in that barn, creeping in the tall grass. His saliva trailing the grounds, with a hint of dry blood on his maw from the previous raid.

"Life can happen in mysterious way that not even the elders could answer that." Dusk'prowl lowers his head, his gaze focused on his nephew. "Just know that you can **never** avoid your fate. It'll **always** find its way back to you-"

Before anything could happen, Sully jumps out of the bush, his maw opening as he quickly makes his way towards the duo. His sharp canines readying for chaos.

Chapter **39**

"**WATCH OUT!**"

Sully jumped out of the tall grass, sneering his teeth at Dusk'prowl.

The rogue felt his nephew's push, his eyes widening when the beast inched closer at them. He purposely shoves Spider'stalk out of the ledge, making him fall onto a bush that cushioned his fall. The small tom screams were echoed by other scavengers and rogues who had made foot in clan territory. The warrior stares out to the dog as Dusk'prowl defended himself. Sully's voice was mixed with heavy panting, and the constant growling. "Our enemy is **your** blood!?"

"Yes!" The rogue retorts, his tail whipped the nearest grass on his right. His movements weary of the dog's aggressive approach. "You have a problem with that?" He moves close to the dog; he wasn't fazed of potentially getting his head bit off. Sully barked at the tom's face, his large muscular form shoving the rogue out of the way. He was expression hesitation, but his anger still ruled over him. "You're a **traitor**!" He barked. "All that work just for you to **fail**! What happened to shame!? What happened to your **promise**?"

"I've done what I can do, but I will **not** put my family into jeopardy. Storm'strike doesn't even want anything to do with you!" He roared, now stepping close to the dog and puffing his chest up. His tail was now pointing onto the ground, the end curled upward a bit. His left stagnant and balanced. The dog couldn't handle the tom's strong resistance, he never thought one of the most loyal can change in a matter of seconds. "You will **suffer**!" The dog runs at him, pushing the tom off the cliff, and jumping down with him as he bit his hip.

Dusk'prowl yowled, clawing the dog's head. His slender body slips from the canine's grip, and fell onto the ground, bleeding on his left side.

Spider'stalk yelped, his muscles tensed as the voice of Scourge took control of his body by instinct. The tom quickly escaped from the bush and shoved his uncle out of the way as Sully jumps on the ground. The two cats saw the dog now charging at them with his muzzle biting the air around him. Dusk'prowl did not hesitate to run off, while Spider'stalk clung his claws onto the rogue's back. Sully was now on his tail, following the trailing blood that leaked from the rogue's hip as the two ran into the thickest bushes and into TerraClan's forest.

The barking was heard of the leader who stood in the shadows, as the rogues surrounded him. He could smell his old friend from a few pebbles away, the anger that ridden his heart, but the ego that took over him as he saw Dusk'prowl running for the first time. But what made him stop and stare, was the tom on the rogue's back. His scar stung from the moment he saw flocks of crows emerging above the trees, while Sully had purposely lured them near the border of TerraClan and the Saviors.

Dusk'prowl didn't know where he was going, his back agonized the pain of Spider'stalk that he was accidentally causing. The rogue turns his face to see Sully closing distance. The small tom was way ahead of his uncle, now screaming as he saw a log on the ground. His uncle didn't notice it until a sharp pain hits his legs that caused the two cats to collapse on the mud and slip right in front of the rogues who watched with glee, especially **one** of them.

The two was now separated, Spider'stalk opened his eyes to see that the rogues were surrounding him and his uncle. He noticed the gray tabby in front of him, who couldn't stop looking at him. His scar grew tremendously painful staring at the small tom for the first time. It had become swollen and possibly infected when thinking of that memory. But he took that pain to fuel his joy and desire, the pain that he couldn't inflict back at the one cat who took the opportunity away from him. It was clear that Dusk'prowl had found himself some big trouble bringing his nephew away from camp.

His size shadowed the area, his amber eyes did not waver at both cats. He held his laughter seeing the two of them, mainly he was there for Dusk'prowl, but now this had taken an unexpected turn. "It seems that a bird doesn't fall far from its nest." He teased, now

standing between the two cats, his mind wanted to focus on the weakened uncle. His expression laced with disgust and mercy just from the sight of his old friend. He blatantly ignored the other tom. "My, my, a sight we have here. Someone who I thought as **friend**, worked alongside with the enemy. Why?" His tone had become dramatically sorrowful that it was laughable, in which he knew that anyways. "You better give me a good answer for this."

"I-... can't..." Dusk'prowl coughs up blood trying to speak, staining his bandana. Spider'stalk saw blood spewing from his uncle's hip after Sully had bit him, the wound looked nasty, and that started to worry him. As Storm'strike approach the tom, as if he was playing with prey, the young warrior yowled on the top of his lungs.

"**Don't touch him!**" He growls, his eyes flickering green. "**I'll kill you if you do anything to him!**" His claws were barren as his fangs lingered from his maw. Another rogue had to quickly hold him down before he could jump at Storm'strike. But he was stubborn, he was putting up a fight, resisting from calming down. "You're so angry," The rogue leader added, his paw gently touching Dusk'prowl like a kit."Has **destiny** affected you the way it had **done** to others?" He tilts his head, his eyes darkening from the bitterness of his tone. "You see, my friend here is suffering, all because of **you**, young one."

Spider'stalk's claws grazed onto Patchy who was holding him down. His pupils dilated the moment the leader began to speak. He stopped briefly, hearing him, before quickly denying. "No-! It isn't my fault; he chose to be here!" He shook his head, his claws clung onto the dirt wanting to escape. Storm'strike had a hint of amusement in his eyes, he lets go of Dusk'prowl and approached the fallen tom. "You're being **delusional**." He speaks. "He only done that because you were the only family he had left. **You** are the one to speak for his suffering, **you** are the one to destroy this tom's **life**."

"He was trying to **help**!" The tears spewed from his eyes. His arms reached from under Patchy, but the rogue stopped him from escaping by pressing him down even harsher. "**And look where that got him.**" Storm'strike moves away from the two, his tail softly touching Dusk'prowl's hip. "You got him to right where he began,

hopeless, lonely," Storm'strike sat on haunches, staring down at the nearly unconscious Dusk'prowl, and then at Spider'stalk. "But now, he'll have that opportunity to make a choice. To choose between this life, or **your** life."

"Get him up." He glared at one of the rogues, demanding them to get Dusk'prowl off the ground. His uncle couldn't believe his eyes seeing his nephew being held down in front of him. He couldn't make a move knowing that it'll cost both of their lives to suffer. He could barely move now that his hip had become numb. His stared at his nephew, standing vulnerably in front of him as the cat separates the two. The rogues surrounded them like an arena, they pondered on who can win the fight. Blood poured from Dusk'prowl, he was now staring at his 'leader' who sat between them.

"I challenge you two on a fight." Storm'strike explains, his head turning towards Spider'stalk. "Now, young one, if you win, he'll fall right into your paws. But if you **lose...** your members will find you **buried**."

"**What?**"

Both cats in the middle responded in unison. Spider'stalk found himself being hesitant of ever doing this to his uncle. He never wanted to lay a claw on him, he didn't want to be the reason that he had gotten hurt. His fur puffing up, his body crouching down, and his tail tucking behind his back legs. Dusk'prowl, who was barely conscious, saw his nephew crouching close to the corner. His eyes gaze at the other rogues who watched the two cats ponder and panic of the choice that was given to them. Storm'strike, unfazed of their silence, took this as a starting point.

"**Make a move, we don't have that much long.**" His rough, condescending voice pierced the cold air.

"**No-**... no.." Spider'stalk backs away, watching his uncle who had found himself in the middle of the rogues' foolery. Their eyes watching him like hawks, waiting for the tortured rogue to tear the intruder apart to prove his loyalty. Their hesitance stirred some irritation from Storm'strike who found annoyance. "Don't you want to escape the past like you **wanted**?" He mutters, his eyes keeping

watch of every movement he makes. He felt unimpressed that he wasn't doing this sooner, the patience is wearing out. "Y- Yes..." Dusk'prowl mewled to the tom in pain, they showed refusal to help with his wounds and only watched him cornering his nephew.

"Then **kill** him." The leader's voice became hoarse, and low. "Show your control over him. Show him that he has no power to take **your** freedom away."

The other rogues screamed and pressured the tom to do what he was told. Dusk'prowl found himself in front of what he saw in his nephew as a lost kit who wept when he left. The storms that separated the two of them wanting to rekindle what was lost. Although he despised his past, he never despised who was part of it. In the darkness, there was always the light, and that was his nephew who had sought for him even when he thought there was no hope.

He went through thick and thin, wanting to protect him from what occurred on the other side of the territory. he wanted to protect him from the past and his fate that one cat has left him in. He thought he had failed, yet he had seen him grow up to be a better warrior than he was. He was the one to guide him, even if it had made such a short interaction. He never wanted anyone to land a claw on him, and he was going to take that promise to the **heart**.

As he approached the tom who begged and wept for him to not kill. The rogue took a sharp turn, now unsheathing his claws and scarring Storm'strike's muzzle and tearing some fur off. Spider'stalk gasped, seeing his uncle turn around in such a fast rate. He wasn't called the 'Prowler' for nothing. The rogues quickly dispersed, giving the young warrior the right time to run, he runs out of the middle, but he couldn't run without his uncle. "**AARON!**" He bellowed, seeing the rogues jumping as the tom ferociously gripped his claws onto the leader and violently shoving him onto the ground.

Storm'strike felt his strength pushing him down, Dusk'prowl took many scratches, but the main focus was his leader. The black tom dug his claws onto his thick, furry neck. His other armed batted the other cats away from his back, but there were lots of them that had

felt anger for what he done to the rogues in the cave. He was being outnumbered.

"NO!" Spider'stalk yelled, his claws digging onto the dirt. "**LEAVE HIM ALONE!**"

Lots of blood had spewed from the tom's belly area. Storm'strike took advantage of the former deputy, and shoved him off, pushing him onto the ground and gripping his claws onto his neck as well. The crimson blood poured all over his fur, but it protected him enough to not get any major injuries. "Is this what you've chosen!?" The leader yells at him, berating him for what he had done.

"**Then, that is what you will receive!**"

A yowl came from the tom as he was held down. The cats gave him deep, unforgettable scarring onto his belly, and tore the old ones open. The ground was painted red, and a few furs that were spat from the violent ceremony. Spider'stalk yelled at the cats, his mind begging for **Scourge** to possess him again and make those cats pay for what they've done. But his size couldn't handle such cats that were bigger, and muscular than him. It made him feel helpless watching him suffer.

"**STOP! PLEASE!**"

His voice was loud enough, but it didn't affect any of Storm'strike's morals as he held the cat onto the ground, at his mercy. He didn't do anything else when he saw Dusk'prowl's blood flowing like waterfalls and creating a decently large puddle below him. The rogue was exhaled slowly, taking his last breaths. His claws did not let go of Storm'strike, it seems that he was silently begging them to not go for his nephew. The leader panted, his bloodied face staring at the young warrior who was sobbing his eyes out. Though, he never found himself feeling merciful for others, the sight of Spider'stalk did soften him. It had given a reminder of his own kits who had died in front of him.

But he had a title to make, cats to rule, and a plan that he made it so clearly to the other clans. There was no time for pity talks.

The cats ran off, leaving the warrior to run at his uncle's weakened body for the last time. He could barely even speak, mixed with his screams of anger and panic. This was hurting him more than the scars. Maybe he should've let Dusk'prowl kill him off so he wouldn't have to suffer. Maybe he should've ran out of that cliff, so his uncle didn't feel the need to care for him as if he was still alive. This was clearly all his 'fault'.

As Spider'stalk's paws held the wounds together to ease the bleeding, his uncle willingly slid those paws away.

"Move forward." Dusk'prowl said, his breathing slowing down. "Don't let **anything** dim your light."

He passed the moment a black feather fell from the tree. Spider'stalk sat there in silence, his face dulling when he saw his uncle take his last breath.

In his peripheral vision, he could sense a ginger cat, watching from above.

Chapter 40, PART 3

Part 3: **Destiny**.

His expression never changed after that day.

From the moment he collapsed on the ground with a puddle of blood, Spider'stalk's soul died with him.

He didn't eat, he didn't drink, he was best at just withering away, so no one else could get hurt. No one else haven't been aware but only a few friends. But even Onyx'foot didn't know how to take with the news that is given to him. There were lots of tasks that have been demanding to him, as well as lots of other warriors now that TerraClan had fallen. It was only left for one cat to feel the tom's grief over a family member that he had lost the moment he became peace with the past and learned to forgive, only this once.

During a stormy day, Spider'stalk found himself dragging the body of his uncle. He had spoken to Ghost'breeze hoping that she could come, but she never responded. He was only left in the trauma of dragging his own uncle across the clearing of BlazeClan's territory. The blood stained his fur, He never wanted to clean the blood his uncle had left on him. He gave all of his strength just to get him to a resting place, where he can finally be **free** just as what Dusk'prowl had wanted.

The heavy rain drenches his fur, finding a seclusive spot close to the northeastern side of BlazeClan's borders, close to the mountains. The area is surrounded by trees and thick bushes. The tom drags the body onto the middle, his limbs aching from the pain of pulling him. The lack of nutrition did much harm to his body in such a short amount of time. As he set Dusk'prowl onto the middle, he collapsed in exhaustion. The storm continuing to rumble above him.

His eyes stared at the hollow body of his uncle, it never closed from

the moment he saw him getting torn by the Storm. Spider'stalk had gotten so angry at himself that he has shut himself out from the world around him. He refused to speak to anyone and began harming himself, so he'll know what it felt like to die without anyone helping him, when he has been refusing one for the last **few quarter-moons**. He had become snappy, unforgiving, and now he was left with no energy or a callback to his old self. He just collapsed onto the ground and crumbled into millions of pieces where the most valuable is lost.

*This is what death feels like. A sleep with dreams to escape the realities of life. I'll hope for a better tomorrow that will last for **eternity**.*

Those thoughts went rampant in his mind, the wind passing by his ears as the tom closes his eyes while in the embrace of his kin.

But a cat said otherwise, standing above the tom who had closed his eyes.

"Spider'stalk?" He called. The young warrior's eyes shot open, seeing that Emerald'glare was standing above him. His brows furrowed at the moment he saw his mentor. "What are you doing here?" The tom asked, his voice turned into a whisper, and that he didn't know his former mentor had possibly followed him to the resting place. "I was looking for you." The deputy responded, now sitting down in front of him. He watched the young warrior standing up and just stared at him in an otherworldly way. "I wanted to join you." Emerald'glare stated, now gesturing his paw at the dead rogue. "I didn't want to make you feel lonely."

"What?" Spider'stalk's voice cracked just a little. "I thought you didn't care."

"Now why would I not care?" Emerald'glare's expression had a frustrated look when hearing his warrior. "You have not eaten and drink for a few sunrises. I've gotten so worried that I couldn't help you then, so let me help you now."

Spider'stalk looks away, his baggy eyes left sore from the number of tears that poured from him, his soul crying out to the skies and what the prophecy had made of him. His life had taken such a turn

that he never prepared for it, it felt like everyone was against him, including SunClan themselves. But only the few who had proved themselves wrong is who the warrior found solace to. The deputy was one of them.

"Can you... help me bury him?" The young warrior asks. "Please?"

Emerald'glare didn't hesitate, he approaches the body with his head lowering in respect of the rogue. "Hold him."

Maybe about an hour, a grave has been dug. Dusk'prowl had made peace in his new permanent home. He was decorated in flowers and pebbles that supposedly protected the grave from bad spirits and pests, it was a standard in tribe culture to preserve the body of their loved ones to secluded spaces, where flowers can grow, and that Dusk'prowl can thrive again without any fear holding him back. This had become more of a coping mechanism for Spider'stalk, to decorate his uncle's grave and create a protective seal over his body. It had eased his grieving soul, only temporarily.

The two cats watched as the rain continued to pour, the sun briefly appeared in the clearest spot of the sky, surrounded by dark clouds. The sunlight streaked downward, surrounding the entire area. The rainy particles made the petals reflect light from the sun, the puddles created a rainbow that distanced from WaveClan camp to the mountains that bordered BreezeClan. Spider'stalk could feel the weight sliding off of him, now seeing the rainbow for the first time in seasons, when his father had rejected him to dare look outside or even step a single paw out.

The wind hits both of their faces, the silence stood between them. Spider'stalk turns to Emerald'glare, his dead expression slowly changing as he saw his uncle's grave, it seems that he had become so fearful. He did feel happy that his uncle had found peace, but before that, there is chaos. His uncle's death can't be the only thing to focus on, the territory is going backwards, and Storm'strike is taking complete advantage of that.

"What... what can we do now?" The young warrior began, his tail curling upward at the anxiety of the winds becoming more aggressive, the cracking of storms increasing in volume. "Things

have taken a turn for the worst, and-... **Rusty'claw**..." He stopped, his eyes instantly closing when hearing the pained yowls of the two brothers who were permanently separated for life. Emerald'glare sighed, it's clear he hasn't known what he could do. Otter'star clearly isn't doing anything just to spite the past. "We may have to take it up to the spirits." He speaks. "**You** are our only hope. If we lose you now, we may have no choice but to leave the territory before we all go down with it. **Destiny** should never be interrupted, Spider'stalk, remember that."

He took those words close to the heart, his eyes blinking at the vision of the crimson eyes who watched over him.

The **sunset** was waiting for the right time to emerge from the darkness.

Chapter 41

There is fire that grows between the paths of two brothers, one who enforces, and the other who opposes. It was like Blaze'star couldn't even know who his brother is anymore. The gruesome past had changed everything.

"Is this who you want to be?" The tom asks him, standing in the mouth of the largest cave there is in the realm of the sun. It is located at the highest top of the mountains, at what was the middle of the realm itself. The spirit was already in a bad mood, hearing about the news of his daughter turning the other direction in life.

The red beacon flickered above them. Red'fang found himself hesitating this decision, but the past weighs on him heavily. *"**We**.. have no choice."* He says, his body standing over the pond that revealed all of the cats underneath his watchful eye. His paws creating small waves that changes to each cat he wants to watch. His eyes only focus for two cats in particular, the ginger that was originally part of the prophecy, and the one who was an echo from the past. *"We spirits, must do anything to make ends meet."*

*"So you're letting him **die**?"* His temper was starting to spark, the flames of his body was starting to spread. *"He was **your** apprentice, a second son! You've lost your daughter because of an accident that was their doing and now you want to be some **murderer** to please them!?"*

*"You think I want **this**?"* The sunset turns around, his eyes heavy and didn't lack the red tears that rained on both sides of his face. *"I've been clawing my way out of hell just to make things right! The island we lived in nearly fell apart twelve-hundred moons ago because of **my** neglect, and the cost of it was **Dani**! I've already have lots of blood on my paws after last time, we will **not** make the same mistake again. **Ever.**"*

Blaze'star's face recoiled in disgust, his tail thumping on the ground

and causing smoke to release from his fur that raged on like fire. *"You don't know anything of what is to become a warrior. It takes responsibility, and it takes **sacrifice.**"* He said, backing away from him as he lowers his head. He never thought he could see his brother be so far down into the hole. He can still relate to losing someone, someone like Nash long ago. That didn't stop him from fighting for other's lives and doing something about it. Then, he turns his head to see that Jade'moon was standing there, watching the two brothers fight with daggers shaped in words. Hitting at each other's hearts.

"But I don't see that in you." He lowers his head, now turning the other direction. *"Not anymore."*

He then leaps off the cliff, fire and smoke followed him to wherever he go. Jade'moon watch him disappear into the clouds, probably going somewhere to cool down. It didn't help that Red'fang had his head turned, hyper-focused on the calculated movements of his claws. The she-cat planned her words beforehand, Red'fang was known in being short-tempered nowadays, but not to her. His eyes soften at the sight of her, though he didn't know how to confront that emotion of warmth. *"You can speak."* He said.

*"The **Absolute** requests your attendance."* She says. *"It's-.."* The she-cat pauses, the stars in her eyes dimming from the thought. *"..important."*

Red'fang's pupils dilates, his claws clung onto the dirt and his tail thumped anxiously. His mind raced on what things the sun wanted out of him, that made him feel doubtful that it'll be anything easy for him. But nothing was ever easy in the beginning, these were his **ancestors** for **gods' sake**, he should've been more grateful at least. He took one deep breath and returned to his stoic form. *"I'll be there."* He says, shrugging her off and leaving the moon warrior in a moment of silence. Jade'moon could tell there was something unusual about his behavior, but she didn't want to cause anymore conflict after what happened. She knew now that no secret should be revealed over who's side she takes.

She disappears shortly after.

The sunset leaves the mountain shortly after, leaving Bloom'moss to monitor his duties while he was gone. He flies across the dark skies, with clouds covering the stars, and the moon. He fled up the mountain and towards the multicolored, spiraled silver above the realm. To what the mortal cats see in the real world, was a red shooting star traveling in a path of white orbs. Red'fang's squints his eyes when he gets through the light barrier of the silver, with gravity dragging him down to the home of the sun. Their domain is oddly dark at the very core of the floating orb, the brightest of the skies.

The hotness turns cold, and the wind blows in front of him. The spirit's paws reaches the ground, with no risk of burning. His ears perked when hearing breathing of a titan whose presence can be anywhere. The two white eyes glowed above the darkness, Red'fang could feel the pressure settling in. It was like an infinite circle of the void that hums an endless song of where life had nowhere to go. With the hand of the sun, it was a controlled path that the warriors were ordered to follow. Without it, is a missed opportunity to greatness.

When everything around him begins to brighten, it revealed a spacious cave with statues, large gnarly trees that is stuck onto the rocky walls with long golden flowers hanging above him. There, the **Absolute** sits before him, with their light spread to different areas, revealing drawings of the cave walls, hidden treasures that sat below the cracks, and the symbol of the sun appeared behind the higher deity. Their voice was the sound of all his ancestors speaking in unison. "**You've arrived late, the stars have dimmed in the fault of your absence.**"

"Forgive me, Great Radiance." He speaks to them, bowing his head. He bit his tongue back at the tone the deity was giving him. His expression appeared to be greatly annoyed when being called about the same thing, over, and over, again. However, what they said, had surprised him. "**I heard of that ginger's path being disrupted.**" They said, with an impression of an upset frown, and the wrinkles forming on their marked forehead, and their claws twitching. "**I'm expecting an explanation.**" They ordered, glaring disapprovingly at the sunset who had to plan his words beforehand. *"He simply*

rejected it." The tom deadpans. *"He saw his brother die, and didn't want anything to do with it."*

*"***And you let him?"** The deity turns their head, tension rising between the two cats. **"What kind of warrior lets the world fall before him?"**

Red'fang's tail flicked, he inhaled only once, a fire building inside him. "A broken one." He says. *"Do you not realize what you're doing? You're taking their lives hostage."* He steps forward to the large cat, the **Absolute's** light was casted down with signs of judgement from the look of their face. **"He was chosen, and so was the tom of the waves. We've made many mistakes in the past, but this prophecy has to happen in an orderly manner. Or we all suffer."**

The sunset stomps on the ground, snapping at the deity. *"Why not I let you explain why we name grief as a 'purpose' and force it down on* ***everyone's*** *throats!?"*

The light wavers, the deity found themself in a power imbalance. They increase force with a flick of their paw, forcefully bowing the tom's head. Their pupils were small, and sharp like a spear ready to be thrown in glares. Red'fang grunts in a sharp pain coming from his neck area, it felt like his head was about to get torn off from how much weight the deity had. They push the sunset back, his body hitting one of the statues. The tom hissed, and was sprawled onto the cold floor, the light bold and glaring, shimmering at the treasures on the side that blinded the tom's eyes. He couldn't see anything, but only the statue of his daughter that made a name of herself due to the sacrifice she made.

"Look at her." The deity stretches its paw out again, forcing the tom to stare at the statue of a young apprentice, the dove that kept on flying towards her destiny. Red'fang see himself crying at her name when she makes a breakthrough to banish the evil spirit once and for all, along with the blizzard that froze her to where she is now, a hopeless ghost with a path that seemed useless. The field that he remembers of flowers, turn into a playground for cats of bloodthirst. He didn't how to act, but to grieve. The memories of him clawing his way to stop her was forever his biggest sin. **"This is**

the reason to your selfishness, and what could've ruined many lives if you didn't let her go." Said the deity, forcing the tom to stare closely as possible. "**Do you understand why this is enforced?**"

"No." His voice muffles, breaking into a moment of where his anger turns to intense sadness and eternal torment. To watch Little'shine fade away from his paws, it was too much. *"This is just playing with your power. You made me watch her **die**, and I couldn't do anything to stop her.."*

*"***I did it for a reason, I saved you and all the others from this.**" The deity cuts him off, releasing pressure from their paw and letting the tom slide down and weep in his arms, hearing the tiny voices of his daughter. He choked up screaming of pain when his old scars began to agonize his tormented body, and flood in red streams. **The Absolute**, however, watches him with an ominous stare. "**Don't make this harder than it seems, Sun Fall.**" Their voice turns into a whisper. "**I've made my words clear, this will not fail.**" They lower their paw, their reverberating voice causing the colossal cave to vibrate and tremble in command. "**Or you'll be the one to pay for it.**"

There is silence, Red'fang's head was buried to his paws, watching the **Absolute** standing on the tall ledge. When there were no words left, the deity disappears with the wind wrapping around them. Then fading away after giving one last look at the sunset.

His red eyes stare at the empty husk of the cave, the darkness embracing him. His breathing changed from heavy, panicked rhythms, to shallow and collected. This was how the Island Territory nearly fell in the first place, it came of one's ignorance to the countless deaths that they've caused, it all took a few cats to overthrow that, and fix what was broken.

Red'fang pulls himself from his weakened position, his eyes stare at the ledge with the feeling of flames in his heart, contained by his bitter, frozen layer.

Now, it was all his decision to either break to build a future, or shatter to save what's left in the past.

This wasn't the first time he did this, but it'll be the last to change everything.

Chapter **42**

He had no control over his life for what had happened along the way. He never left that grave, and only sat there to watch the flowers grow each day until he had enough courage to avenge him. But he didn't know what to do now, he had no power over his **destiny**. When the rain first begins to pour after the moon disappeared, as well as the stars that left the clan in the shadows of their own mistakes. Spider'stalk was puzzled that the light orb in the skies have disappeared. He was only left meeting the blue eyes of his ancestor, who he begins to despise.

"You're brooding." A raspy voice blurts from the cat's maw. His spiked, purple collar dangling below him. He did not ask a question, he just wanted to imply about his ancestor's expression. Spider'stalk turned his head, avoiding the voices of **Scourge** haunting his every move. "Go away." He orders. "I have nothing to offer." He lies on to the side, watching the trees move from the cold wind. He had no tears left to cry, only his body sulking into the bugs and fleas that eats his skin. The grief that devoured his soul and left him dry. The ghost was disappointed of his apathetic behavior. "*You're giving up too fast.*" he says. "*But I know how it feels to be powerless.*"

"So, it's your size is what makes up for your precious need of power?" He responds with a tinge of annoyance to his voice. Scourge's muzzle wrinkled after being told of the past that he had left behind. It was a reoccurring imagery that he despised for a long time. *"An immature approach that is."* The ghost then sits down, his face towering above him. *"For long I have been around you, I start see me **in** you."*

"That's bull." The warrior growled. "We have **nothing** in common."

"*We do.*" Scourge's blue eyes changes into the color of gray clouds. He was giving him the sight of the past where the ghost first found the tom weeping on the wet grounds in the midst of a bad storm.

Spider'stalk's eyes was left shocked, then grew into anger. He **hated** that memory, and he never wanted to be reminded of it again. His attempts to push the tom away were futile, Scourge's face moved closer, forcing him to stare into the eyes of the vulnerable. "*Look at **it**.*" The ghost continued to stare at him, Spider'stalk's eyes had tears from the moment he saw himself clawing the ground in frustration, his head staring out to the clouds before lowering into a weak, curled position. It was the night that the flower had faded off from him, and he never saw himself the same ever again.

"*It's **you.***" The ghost slowly closes his eyes, revealing back to his icy glare. His face would soften a little coming from the face of the warrior crying for **Sunflower**. "*You had no control over what have happened to you, and I can't blame that.*" Scourge closes his eyes, as if fighting his own emotions to ever be revealed around the speechless warrior. "*I've had my fair share of that, followed by the memories of nearly meeting my own demise.*" His face turns slightly, until facing towards the dark skies where the moon is glowing subtly behind the clouds. "*I only covered the trauma by focusing on my ambitions, but it never left me.*"

Spider'stalk looks around with a panicked expression, the cold sweat veiling his face and leaving his body cold. He puffs like a train passing by, until he was able to calm down as the memories fade, he was following the voice of the fallen BloodClan leader. He gazes at the skies with him, now stuck in a moment of silence. The crickets chirped in the distance, and the breathing of the ghost is only heard from his ears, nothing else. Maybe he had a reason to be silent until now, being taunted by the voices every day, only to be comforted by the one who never spoke.

"We're you scared of death?" Spider'stalk begins to ask him. "Was it your **destiny**?"

The ghost sighed; it had been a hard question to face ever since he dropped dead during the battle. The fire had melted the ice in him, there was nothing to protect, or bound anyone to his emotions. "*I was, hated to admit it really.*" The ghost shrugged. "*My **destiny** was to die in the claws of my unknown brother. I could've cherished my life with my clan. Greed and pride are what led me to my death.*"

Those words are what led him choke his words away, the paranoia followed by the eyes of the **sunset** that always seem to follow him. He had something to do with SunClan and his inevitable **destiny.** "I'm scared." Spider'stalk closes his eyes, taking a deep breath. "I don't know what to do now, or what to be. I'm losing hope for what was left of it when I left the house. I'm nothing, and it'll be like that until I die a hopeless death."

"*You are not useless.*" Scourge says. "*Your fate may be unavoidable, no doubt. But your story doesn't end here. It's what you make the most of it.*"

The ears of both cats' flickers, hearing the rogues patrolling the outskirts of TerraClan's forest. Spider'stalk immediately jumps back, his fur shooting upward as his ears tracked the haunting footsteps of the rogues who hunts for any cats lingering in their territory. The two cats had to think fast, or the warrior will be next to their murderous count.

"*There should be a shortcut down west. Those rogues are scared to go further beyond the border."* He gestures a dirt road down the bushy and darkest part of the forest. "What a great plan that'll be." Spider'stalk sarcastically replied as he takes off walking in the use of his long legs. The ghost growled lowly in response.

"*I'll work **with** you, **not** for you. Unless you really hate your life.*"

---------**Meanwhile.**

There were paws marching continuously throughout the territory of TerraClan, the rogues claimed the forest as theirs, it was now easy to take down WaveClan, as they were rumored to have **Opal's Eye** after the death of Moonie. With enough outrage, they were encouraged to avenge their fallen members and destroy the clan that they have lost to many moons ago. Storm'strike thought it could be easy; their leader didn't really care enough to send out patrols since Dusk'prowl's death. He was nothing more than just a distraction to Otter'star.

To Spider'stalk, he was everything. Everything he dreamt for in the past, everything he had wanted to be like during his younger days.

All of that was gone just in a snap of a finger, and he will never forgive the blissful ignorance of the leader. With things that have been happening, and only the deputy had to be responsible for everything that has occurred, the clan couldn't take it anymore longer. Their only mistake was staying silent after the gathering, now they're able to retaliate without consequences. The tides rose, and the storms above the territories cracked. It may have been Wave'star's way of subtle message. His offsprings have greatly disappointed him.

He does take a careful eye at a warrior roaming the darkest of the forests. The cold air accompanied him, Scourge's ghostly presence followed the young tom with his sharp eyes watching every step. They were deadly close to the border, Spider'stalk had to crouch when seeing the silhouettes of the rogues on the other side. His smaller form, and quiet steps gave him the advantage to move without any conflict blocking his way. His demeanor changed; he became irritable, and paranoid but in a silent perspective. He didn't know what life to choose, and what life had made him happier. There were cats that proved themselves, and the others that he felt deep in his guts, were there to stab his back.

From what happened that day, it had proved him that **he** wasn't ready for the clan life. He secluded himself from everyone, even his closest friends, fearing that one of them will be next. He didn't blame Onyx'foot for avoiding him, it was for the best that he has to stay away from others, for the greater good of his clan living to another day. Barely, the clan could breathe peacefully now that a war is starting.

"Why aren't anyone following my orders anymore?" Otter'star emerges from his den, constantly ranting as his pupils moved from side to side, agitated. The environment was now tense, nothing couldn't protect him anymore. Emerald'glare followed the leader, his eyes left cold and unforgiving, he wanted to say something, but his morals kept his maw shut. "I do not know, Otter'star. It seems that your power is only limited." He follows the tom down to the tunnel where the light of the lake below the ledge remained at the end of the tunnel. The smell of metallic blood did overwhelm the deputy's nostrils. The bodies were still stuck in the debris that

blocked half of the underground caves.

"I'm the son of Wave'star, I should at least have some power around here." Otter'star bickered, his tail swaying lowly. His eyes focused at the ancient markings on the cave walls before turning his body towards his deputy, the two cats stuck in the darkness. The rushing of the waterfall remains behind him. "Web'star chose me for a reason, they're running me over like monsters, only **you** can get them to **listen**." He sits down, glaring at Emerald'glare. The leader did expect the deputy to kiss his paws for him, but what he said had caught him off-guard. The deputy grew tired of the leader's oblivious words. "For a good reason." He added. "You've been absent on your duties for more than three moons, yet you call yourself the son of Wave'star?"

"It was only for a reason!" Otter'star retorted. "You do know I get stressed **very** easily."

"You've been having the time of your life with other she-cats for someone who's 'stressed'!" Emerald'glare moves close to his leader, his tail striking the cold ground. "Your clan **hates** you, Otter'star. I'm only asking this once if you can resign for **your** safety."

The leader was left speechless of Emerald'glare's demand, it made him even more agitated, and annoyed. "That'll be the last thing I'll do, to turn my back against the clan. You think it's easy to **replace** me when I've done so much?" He began to raise his voice, trotting close to the deputy's face. "I'm losing it here! You have no right to criticize me!" His ears were subtly pinned back, he was greatly annoyed to the extent that he couldn't have the power that he wanted over him. "**You** will destroy our clan!" The deputy cuts the leader off, a growl following behind his voice. He steps forward, not even fazed at the leader's aggressive approach. "We have bigger things to worry about, and you aren't making a difference. Those cats will **kill** you, so will your own kin."

"Brother!" Orca'leap yells, panting and running across the empty cave and interrupting the two cats arguing. "Scavengers in the border, I repeat! Scavengers are **in** the border!"

The two cats were silent about the news, the deputy, however,

didn't hesitate to follow his brother. "Onward!" He yells, running down the hilly and to the entrance while Orca'leap trails behind. Otter'star was left with a conflicted decision of interfering with the war or leave. He lost hope and value for the clan now that it was all out of his control. From losing a friend, to losing a mate, and risking his daughter's relationship, his past is all nothing but a blur. It was a quiet send-off to his leadership, finding himself useless for the position. He takes off running to the dark caves, where only one tunnel is open for him to flee.

The first wave of dogs is released from the forests. They retaliated aggressively by instantly charging at the patrolling cats. The warriors began to run off, leading them away from camps while causing indirect damage in the use of nature. The harsh rain poured onto the backs of the clan cats who were desperate to keep the dogs away from the camps.

Queens, kits, and elders had already evacuated to BreezeClan just in time for the second raid to begin.

Chapter **43**

With chaos ensuing below the hill, the Storm observes with the cats surrounding the area. Rusty'claw sat next to him, watching as the scavengers continued their rampage. His ego had inflated, seeing that his plans worked accordingly.

He could feel the proud ghosts of his lost family, finally seeing him achieve without ever following the law of **destiny** that destroyed his life and others. "You see this?" Storm'strike turns to his new deputy, gesturing at the chaotic view of the scavengers raiding the territory. "This is what you've wished for in the past. This is **now** granted to you, Rusty'claw." His tone was condescending. He showed no mercy to those who had interfered with his plans. "You'll be saving lives just as much as I wanted to. This is **your** chance to **shine**."

The ginger tom observed cats getting chomped down by the dogs, including Sully, who had violently discarded another body in front of the tom, with blood spewing everywhere. The shrieks and yowls of others who watched in horror, his face left neutral and apathetic. It's like he had lost a huge part of him; his morals and determination were nothing to him. He was just another speck of dust ready to be swept away. He knew that the only discharge from this war was to die.

"I see them, I see them all." He responded in a heartless, dull manner. "When will we enter the cave?"

"Don't be too excited about this. All it takes is patience, but it's clear on who the winner is." Storm'strike moves his head, letting the white shining of the sun veil his fur, to bask in the glory of the spirits who prayed on his downfall. Now he has the power. He has the light. "SunClan has **nothing** on us, Rusty'claw. We're **unstoppable.**"

Meanwhile, Emerald'glare pursued two medium-sized dogs with the patrol on his side. But he easily became outnumbered when three

more began to surround him. Blood painted the grounds; the cries of horror were forever stuck onto his mind now that he was failing his clan. This was a repeat like moons ago, the lake settlers taking away the light of the sun, the eyes of hopelessness flooded into tears. He couldn't handle the stress; he couldn't handle the pain anymore longer.

The dogs caused the patrol to split up. He stood right in front of his brother, protecting him from the surrounding enemies. Their canines charged at the cats, Orca'leap had to dodge every move from the scavengers, but was bit by the arm, causing him to collapse. "**NO!**" Cried Emerald'glare, batting the heads of the dog before they began to run at him. As the deputy stood there, a crow appeared out of nowhere and began to attack the eyes of the dog, who howled and whined in pain. It took the others' attention as a murder of crows began to surround the territory, attacking the scavengers specifically.

The ominous caw of the black avians raised concerns, some even with flashbacks of the one and only. Was it death itself answering their cries? Or was it the spirits' anger of the clans who did nothing to prevent the hectic war. "What the hell?" Storm'strike stood from spot, his fur rising intensely as he saw the crows spiraling everywhere and chasing his scavengers away. "What is going on!? Why are their crows everywhere!?"

His scar stung like thorns being prickled onto his eyes, a painful reminder of his past loss that triggered his need for vengeance. He yowls in pain, his head booming constantly while his heart races. He found himself in a terrifying vision of a flock of crows surrounding the cat that gave him the scar. While Rusty'claw was left in shock with the birds surrounding one area that became the flames that moths were attracted to. The murder disperses as it reveals one small black cat emerging from the dark forests and running down the hill with many other cats from different clans.

Storm'strike opens his eyes, seeing his late deputy's nephew running across the clearing as the crows and cats follow him.

He lifts his head and makes the loudest cry of bloodshed, coincidentally at the moment of a thunder strike.

"**ATTACK!**"

The rogues raced down, trotting the wet grounds as the rain poured on them. The crows covered the white sun, now blocking the cats' views as the clan cats run at them. The leaders gestured their paws and quickly outnumbered their enemies. Rusty'claw and Storm'stike took off running at the opposite way. The rogue leader wasn't missing this opportunity to find the **Opal's Eye** and claim his life back. Close to the entrance of WaveClan's cave, Storm'strike abruptly stops the ginger tom, now seeing Spider'stalk running at their way. "Teach that Softpaw a lesson!" He demanded, shoving the ginger. "I'll meet you at the other side once I find that pond!"

This annoyed Rusty'claw, he explodes on the leader for running away. "Coward! You can't make me stop a war **you** started!"

"We have no time to waste!" Storm'strike says, as he takes off running inside the cave. "Follow my orders!" His voice echoes.

The ginger tom was left to deal with the war on his own, but it was clear he may have been outnumbered. Still, he would never leave this world without battle, a battle of a lifetime with an old enemy, and a supposed ally. Spider'stalk saw the fighting all around him, the fighting that he caused and finished in a moment of seconds. The rogues fled the scene. He was only left surrounded by the crows that were controlled by his own influence. He never thought that this could work well despite fighting Scourge about the whole thing.

As the young tom sat there, he felt a disturbance behind him, causing the BloodClan ghost to scream.

"**BEHIND YOU!**"

Rusty'claw appears from a murder of crows, his claws unsheathed as he pounces at the young tom. There was a moment where he felt like himself again, but powered by more anger, how much the clans had favored him, he thought the warrior as a weak apprentice just when he first met him, but he was met with a rude awakening. Spider'stalk's eyes were still yellow. He had shown complete control of himself, guided by the quick movements that he had been

training himself for a long time. His claws scraped the ginger's neck, clinging onto his body and slamming him onto the ground. Furs spat from the violent occurrence.

The deputy yowled; the claws of the young warrior dug onto his hips. He lost his balance for a good second before using his hind legs to kick him. Spider'stalk winces in pain, and the crows went for Rusty'claw's face, distracting him from the young warrior who followed the rogue leader's scent. Truly, he did not want to continue the battle with an old foe, Storm'strike was the real enemy, but the ginger tom found it hard to deny such hatred. He claws one of the crows and emerges from the feathery flock, pushing him inside the crystal cave.

"HALT!" The deputy shrieked. "THERE'S NO USE TO FIGHT A BATTLE THAT YOU WILL LOSE!" Rusty'claw pounces at the tom once again, but the warrior is quick enough to claw his hip. Scourge's strength allowed the tom to push him away as a warning.

"This isn't your battle to fight!" He yowled while following Storm'strike to the **Opal's Eye**. "The territory depends on us!"

"NO!" The tom hisses, blood appeared from his scarred body, coming from both the crows and the minor injuries the small tom gave him. He extends his arms, dragging himself from the cold grounds, and continues to chase him. The light blinded both of the cats' eyes. Storm'strike cackled as multicolored streaks of light bounce off the light of the grounded crystals. The caves trembled and shook from the power that the pond holds. The spirits of the past escaped from the eye, the waves spiraling and creating the noise of a large roar that could've been heard during a bad storm.

"The spirits are using you, Spider'stalk!" His voice is hoarse; he panted as he made his way to the small tom. His claws scratched the tom's back as the two clung together and collapsed from the ledge. Spider'stalk screeched, feeling the blood of open scars stinging his fur. The two briefly separated from the fall, and the deputy crawled towards him as he flexed his claws to swipe at him. "They want to see the **monster** in all of us! SunClan only hides behind the clouds for a reason!" The ginger tom desperately held the tom from entering the pond.

"You're losing yourself! Don't you remember your family!?" Spider'stalk's claw grips his shoulder. He never had intentions to hurt him, but the warrior was making it hard to do so. "Your brother died saving you, and you're disregarding his memory to join the enemy!" He kicks his hind belly, his claws gripping the stone ground as the light blinds his eyes. "They're **DEAD! THEY'RE ALL DEAD!**" He cried to the tom, pinning him down and forcing him to stay and look at his green eyes. To being the ancestor of a hero to an enemy disregarding his memory, the stress had overwhelmed him, and now he only finds himself to be a waste of Firestar's legacy.

"I have **nothing** to live for, and neither should **YOU!**"

Rusty'claw then saw his leader jump into the rumbling waves, the light as brighter as the sun. The rogue leader's body disappears as soon as the light takes hold of him. Spider'stalk watched, his heart beating from the adrenaline. He claws the ginger tom's throat, creating a deep wound in an attempt to let go. "Get off of me! You're letting him win!" The tom yells, now escaping Rusty'claw as he too, would jump into the eye of the pond.

The world around him turns white.

He is followed by the deputy's yowl who trailed behind him. Spider'stalk found himself in a different realm, the air leaving his lungs as he fell from the orange sky. The echoed cries of a different world, shattering as the boundaries of the eye have been broken. The tom could barely speak or scream out Rusty'claw's name. All he saw was the silhouette of the cats that he fought, falling into their own versions of the past. He found crows surrounding him, taking hold of his physical being and safely landing him to the forest below him. Spider'stalk began to panic as he thought that he was running out of breath. He couldn't hear Scourge's voice anymore. He had to do this mission on his own.

Wind traveled into his nostrils, his jaw opening as he took one deep breath. The crows became a hovering platform, taking him to wherever was safe for him. His eyes darted at the eerie environment, where all the leaves and grasses were white as snow. He oversaw the pale blue house hidden in the mountains; the crows

lowered, now preparing to land at the porch of the two-leg nest. Spider'stalk begins to panic, his eyes watered, and his chest becomes a stressed engine of a monster trying to move away from what was chasing its owner. He felt his heart dive into an endless sea of quicksand, drowning. He couldn't stand living in that home, so why are the crows putting him there?

He felt the flock parting into three sides. The one in the middle went even lower, now landing at the ledge of the front lawn. Spider'stalk rolls from the flock, getting bombarded by feathers and landing onto the grounds of his old home. He glances at the rows, spiraling in the skies and landing right in front of him, forming into a black cat. It had orangish-yellow eyes and a white tail tip. His muzzle is long, and his ears are sharp. His webbed paws gave him enough reminder to realize that this was his father.

Strangely enough, he did not have his green collar. He was only dressed in a feathery shawl made of corvids. His eyes wandered at his son, finding guilt and hopelessness, knowing that he could've prevented everything that happened to him. Spider'stalk froze, glaring at his father. He wanted to say something, but there was only silence. What he wished to say to the tom, who greatly harmed their relationship, became the long guilt that he had for his family. The two exchanged glares and often refused to look at one another. One out of anger, and the other in fear.

Knowingly, this was only in the past. This was what Jeffrey had always dreamt of. To reunite with his precious son once again, the son that he had ruined in fault of his own fear. He approaches him, the shawl dangling from his back. He purred, rubbing his head against his son's. The warm feeling overpowered his dying heart. Spider'stalk wished to reject this, but to his innocent nature being known as **Sunflower**, he wished to be a kit again and to love his family again. He closes his eyes, embracing his father's love, and the birds chirped in the background, leaving the two in tranquility.

Unfortunately, it was only for a matter of time.

Spider'stalk smelt a fiery smoke ahead of him, a loud boom shaking the realm and causing lightning to scatter across the sky. Jeffrey emits a low mew, sensing danger of the Storm's greed, breaking the

rules of **destiny**. The young warrior looks at his father changing into a flock of crows. He patiently waited, letting the murder elevate him from the blue house. There was still time to fix the chaos that the Storm had created.

Few mountains away, Rusty'claw had found himself in the middle of nowhere, surrounded in darkness that blinded him from what truly mattered. But what was the point that he had lost **everything**? He wanted everything out of greed and ego until one cat had truly made him look through his morals. By the time he melded his family together in an unbreakable bond, everything around him collapsed. All he could remember was the cry, the vigil, the betrayal that he saw in Sun'star, and his entire clan. Thunder rumbled from the ashy clouds, the voices of Storm'strike teasing him, the stress that he was put in, all because of the rogue leader and many others in his life.

But **destiny** had been the sole reason. The loss of his family, the traumatizing events that happened in his life, it had been his own doing, driven by the prophecy that had doomed his life. He didn't even know if he was truly a hero of the clans. He had gone too deep and never had a chance to come from the darkness of his life. The voices began to trigger his mind. He felt deep pain all over his body, and the scar Spider'stalk had given that made him fall on the spot. He lets out a loud mewl to the skies, the spirits that had corrupted him, the guilt that he had caused to his family, Web'star, everyone.

He hears a loud caw above him, the colossal wings of a giant crow tearing the skies as the darkness embraces the father and son. The ginger tom stares at them, flying underneath the white sun. He lifts himself up and makes his way down the valley when the clouds disappear from the wings that parted the sky.

A streak of light tore the atmosphere, Storm'strike stood in front of the eye surrounded by energized crystals and centered the drowning place. It has long been activated since he had forcefully entered. His dreams were coming to a reality. He had found his long-awaited treasure after the loneliness and failure. But it all seems too different now that he saw his family as possessive valuables. He has done nothing better to improve himself other

than his own gain from this. His eyes were wide, and he wasn't harmed by the potential blindness. He knew that there was going to be light at the other end of the tunnel. Until he feels the ground shaking, the large black avian flying above him. Storm'strike spots Spider'stalk on the crow, and his eyes grew to anger in the presence of the tom. "Damn you!" He yells. "You don't know how much **destiny** is corrupting you!"

The large crow disintegrates into many more as they disperse into the dark sky.

"You deserve no family after ruining others who care for their own!" Spider'stalk's voice echoes across the clouds until he finds himself landing on the ground, standing in front of the rogue leader. He snarls at the large tom, showing no fear than when he first saw him slain his uncle. "How are you going to ask for one when you've **killed** mine?" He eyes at the leaded, and then at Rusty'claw who was now emerging from the bushes. He felt pained knowing that the ginger tom had finally lost the true spirit of himself. "Easy!" Storm'strike spat, his eyes casting a white glow with lightning that bounded his body. This surprises Spider'stalk to see the clouds churn and rumble above him. "I'll make sure you'll never see yours again. They'll never be hurt by your **destiny** no more!"

He harshly steps his paw onto the ground, causing the plates to crumble and the realm to collapse under his powerful might. The thunder hits the earth, cliffs opening below Spider'stalk. The tom jumps at the rogue, clawing his back and biting down onto his muscles. Storm'strike bats his face, scarring his nose in an attempt to push him off. The black tom's webbed paws did take advantage of the strength the rogue tom has.

The two cats began to cling onto each other, fighting like a twister of fur hitting the ground and blood being drawn on both sides. "**YOU'RE WEAK! JUST AS THAT CROW-FACED CAT!**" The rogue snarls, now scarring the face of Spider'stalk, making him release from the tom's grip. "**YOU'RE THE REASON YOUR UNCLE HAD CHOSEN THIS FATE JUST TO SAVE SOMEONE SO USELESS**!"

Blood poured from the corner of the tom's eyes, the redness blinded his clear vision, but he noticed a blue light coming from the skies,

being trailed by ice as he saw his ancestor on the ground. Storm'strike panted, his breathing turned into a form of an exhausted hiss, his throat burned from his yelling. "YOU'RE NOTHING, AND WILL **ALWAYS** BE NOTHI-"

The beacon does a shockwave, causing all three cats to fall back. The ground shaken and crumbled more, Spider'stalk fell into the abyss, which prompted the rogue's victory.

Rusty'claw felt cracks below him as well, he skips over, and his eyes panicked at the terrifying sight of the destruction that the rogue caused. But that didn't stop him from getting what **he** truly wanted now, and the goal was right in front of him. "**Fool**!" Storm'strike cackled victoriously, he moves in front of the beacon as he felt the territory crumble before him. He didn't want to waste time. He could hear the cheerfulness of his family waiting for him on the other side. He had a goal of wanting to start anew on the other side, and that had infuriated the ginger tom to something that he wanted for a long time, not just death, but a new life that **he** wanted control of.

As Storm'strike steps forward, he sees Rusty'claw glaring at him. It puzzled the rogue, but there was nothing he could do now that the goal was right in front of him. When he makes a chance to run into the beacon that withheld his new life in an alternate future. Rusty'claw pounces at him, clawing his back and his throat as he takes him down to the void below them. The rogue leader yowls, falling back as his paws hit the ground once again, causing devastating shockwaves that caused the two cats to fall. The leader choked on his blood, the light disappearing from his eyes as he fell. The ginger tom's claws clung onto his body.

"What are you doing!?" The rogue shrieks as the two fall into the endless void.

The tom didn't say anything, his eyes were showing his further intentions. He had a deadly, and hopeless look of a tom that didn't have anything to lose, but himself.

If there is peace on the other side, so let it be.

Spider'stalk clung onto the falling debris, his pupils dilating at a blue streak of light trailing ice from his paws. The tom jumped off of the debris, letting the ghost take hold of his body. Though he never was stable in the use of his possession, the rogue had made an effort to help his ancestor. Spider'stalk was now flying, his eyes bled green as he targeted the two falling cats, making an effort to save one of them. His facial expressions were concentrated; he uses his strength to fully push the two toms away from their doom. Storm'strike was panicking, he bats his paws onto Spider'stalk's head, yelling. "**HE'S A TRAITOR! HE'S GOING TO GET US KILLED! HE-**"

A loud screech from the light had made it harder for the rogue's voice to go through. A green aura surrounded him like a falling star. Spider'stalk didn't take control of his movements and mind to realize that he was pushing *both* of them to the light, which he thought was the entry back to reality. This was going to be the end of it all. The misery that Storm'strike caused and the end to their **destiny**, which has finally been achieved.

NO!" Storm'strike's last yowl is heard before losing.

The rivaling cats then enter the light, and the entire realm explodes as all three were pushed in.

Spider'stalk may have thought he was doing something *finally* right. The prophecy has been fulfilled, and maybe the clans can finally be at peace. But he was only greeted with a terrifying discovery, an unexpected transformation of the old foe.

In a land of destruction, he found himself in tremendous pain, stuck in dry ground, riddled with scars and maggots all over his body. He ached everywhere he moved, and the fire spread across the forest as he was met with a gruesome sight of bodies and a dying landscape. He coughs from the dust, reaching his throat and burning his eyes. Stepping on the ground feels like stepping into sharp glass. He could barely walk from how weak his legs are. He was terrified of seeing the bodies of cats he knew and those that were far from violence.

Was this a foreshadowing moment for a big mistake he's done to

them? He thought he did something right and completed the tasks given from the prophecy rain, but the ginger had other plans. This was all hinted with a purpose.

Spider'stalk's eyes darted at the fire rising from the sea of dust and red dirt, the whistling wind intensely threw dust all on his face, ears, body, and mouth that caused him to choke. His neck was dry and burned from the scream he led out from the itching pain. He stared into the fiery spirit in horror, now that Rusty'claw's body was distortional and monstrous coming from his transformation. He flexed his claws and his body that produced flames from everywhere he went. His red eyes were now staring deeply into the tom's soul.

"**You set me free.**"

His voice is ominous and sinister. He feels his newly formed body, becoming the size of a reigning spirit of destruction. He points to his chest, feeling a new rise of independence.

"**Right where I should be.**"

His voice rang to new distances, causing the grounds to crack and tremble like the cave that crushed his brother to death. Spider'stalk quickly got up and began to run into the other side where he believed light to be the exit. There, he could see the red sun growing as the size of the universe the Inferno had at the tip of his claws. The chains that once held him back were broken off for good. "**Where do you think you're going!?**" The spirit raised his other paw, causing the wind to push in the opposite direction. His force dragged the black tom and his bloody paws trailing the thick sand back to the land of destruction. He wasn't even paying attention, until he realized that this wasn't a nightmare his brain is tricking him to, no.

This was reality.

"**Do you know what you did to me?**" The trees fell on the small tom who was trapped underneath the debris as an attempt to flee. Spider'stalk's eyes focused on the spirit that hovered high and mighty like the flaming bird at its last spark. He gave glances at the

shrinking light, but that made it all worse and was taken by ignorance. "**You're so focused on that damned light that you can't even look at the destruction you have made of me,**" The spirit's voice is low and threatening. "**Is this what you want? Sunflower? Is this what you want out of OUR legacy?**"

Spider'stalk remained in silence, and in shock. There, he felt a burn on his back that caused his eyes to glow as the flames in front of him. The tears fell from his eyes when he began to see the inevitable future. The bloodshed of the forest in the midst of blazes, the skin of cats tearing and withering away as they yowled in pain. Charred bodies laid under the ashes, with sunken eyes of anguish and pain that they all suffered.

This is what the **Inferno** had felt for the first time ever, and it felt like he had found himself again. A flaming bird to be born anew.

"**But you won't look away from this, now, can you?**" The tom teased, releasing Spider'stalk from his vision. The small tom hyperventilated and yowled from the burning pain in every limb of his body. He couldn't gather himself from fighting back or at least prevent the tom from doing what he wanted. "**The unrest of it all, would it be nice for the world to become quiet?**" The spirit said, now spreading his arms and manipulating the fire to close in as the sun tore what was left of the sacred lands. The soft crackling that could've been a sign of comfort was the epitome of destruction and souls that had been burned alive.

"They don't deserve this! **No one** should die!" Spider'stalk cried to the spirit as he felt his entire body subduing the tearing pain as the fire spread onto the fallen trees. "What has happened to you after all this time?" His voice grew quiet, his limbs crushed by the trees that trapped him to die. He thought he could see a soul that once changed, but now, all time is lost. "**All this time?**" The spirit cackled. "**I've been hurting, Spider'stalk. The world had grown too loud, too distressed, too selfish!**" The fire consumed the rest of the burning land, now fully surrounding both the Inferno and the tom.

"**No one will ever make what is of me other than myself!**" The tom then pulls his paw forward, bringing the sun close to where the

land starts to disintegrate into ashes. "**I'll show you; I'll show the world what I am made of!**"

Then, one last action he had made, he rose up to the sky as the sun began to consume the entirety of the twisted realm.

Then it all goes black.

Chapter **44**

Spider'stalk found himself in a cold moss bed below him. His eyes slowly opened, being met by a blurry vision of his clanmates surrounding him, which he thought were rogues treating him as a cruel circus attraction. He groans in tremendous pain, feeling a burning sensation underneath the skin where a new power has settled onto the veins. His delicate paws felt his new body, and his movement caught the attention of the refuging warriors, mainly ones from WaveClan.

"He's awake!" Cried Onyx'foot, who saw the tom's eyes open for the first time; he was the first to drag him out of the intense debris. Emerald'glare ran into the crowded medicine den of BreezeClan to see if his old apprentice had survived the horrible destruction of their clan. He pushes everyone out of the way, he didn't notice the tom's appearance and only checks for his wellbeing. Spider'stalk becomes overwhelmed by the constant nudging that his old mentor was giving him. Although, he knew this was out of affection, worry, and relief. It was a father reuniting his lost son for the first time.

"I'm okay... I'm okay -" Spider'stalk uses his paws to gently move his mentor around, he felt a stinging sensation on his left **white paw**. His eyes widened at the strange occurrence on his paw, had something changed in him? "Sorry!... Sorry." Emerald'glare leans back. He takes a deep breath to calm himself. "I was just caught in the moment. I thought you died in there." He blinks, making the tears drop away from his face. His pupils did eye at his paw, which he had never seen before. "Yeah... I... uhm..." His head spins. He could barely walk. "I was caught in the moment and.."

"What happened to your eyes?" Monty, who hid in the corner at the time, gestures his paws to his face. Onyx'foot hisses at him, batting his arm. "That isn't relevant!" He pushes his arm down, but that didn't stop Monty's curiousness and his concerned thoughts for him. "That isn't normal if he just comes out as a new cat." He stares at Spider'stalk, who was staring at his arms, and then at his body. He

notices a small pond in front of him.

The tom silently shoves everyone out of the way, causing some of them to complain.

"Watch the tail!" A TerraClan apprentice snarls at him.

He did not listen and only went in further until he saw his own reflection of his face. There were scars, deep and revealing. His eyes were indeed yellow on the outside, but close to the center is where it deepened to the vibrant color of green. The minor but eerie transformation led to one thing that has happened to him. "We've **bonded...**?" He whispers, his eyes alarmed by the voice that appears in his head. "*I believe so.*" The ghost responded, his voice giving him a cold shudder. The stinging pain on his body was comparable to having hypothermia. "What did you say?" Emerald'glare turns his head. He moves forward, hoping that the warrior was alright. "Did anything happen to you and Storm'strike in there?"

Spider'stalk quickly turns around, and his body nearly slips into the pond. His legs were shaking erratically. "I can't lie to you... that cat had something crazy in plan. I didn't believe he wanted to do all of this just for his 'family'." He briefly looks away, in attempt of driving the attention away from his appearance. "But at that last minute, Rusty'claw had done something drastic... I-... don't believe he ever made it out alive." He faces to the stone walls, eying at the ancient carvings, where one had the eyes of the **sunset**.

Oxygen had left Emerald'glare's mouth, but it was followed by relief that things had finally been settled. "May he rest." He lowers his head. "You shouldn't be discouraged. The both of you have completed the prophecy, the territory will be back to normal in no time." His voice was his feeling of pride over the cat. He was proud of him for overcoming those obstacles. However, things still didn't feel **alright**. From that vision that occurred moments ago, that's when he realized just that **one** specific detail of the prophecy.

"**The clans will burn over the death of the broken-hearted.**" Spider'stalk mouths the prophecy. He noticed that cats all around him were talking as if the war was finally over. It had been so long

when the prophecy was first assigned that everyone had completely forgotten about the warning SunClan had given. Each voice overlaps with the others, but the voice of **Inferno** grows louder each second. What he heard in the world of destruction was his promise to the spirits over the loss of his family. He'll show everyone what it feels to have **nothing**.

"**The clans will all burn**!" He exclaims, causing the den to be silent. The two medicine cats, Hail'glow and North'burn's duties, were stopped by the interruption. The injured cats couldn't believe what their future hero was saying to them. "Can't you all listen!? The flames will plague us all!" His eyes flickered the color of green, the tears escaped his baggy lids. The screams that he emitted echoed the entirety of the clan's cave, causing further hysteria to himself. "There will be **no one** alive if we dare to ignore this!"

"Spider'stalk -... what are you saying?" Onyx'foot approaches him, his expression confused of the warrior's wordings.

"Don't come any closer!" The tom hisses, his claws extending from their tiny hollow sheathes of his paws. The paranoia matched by the grim hallucinations of Rusty'claw burning everyone alive. The smell of smoke, blood, and odor from the bodies causes him to nearly vomit. He immediately takes off running as the voices of cats begin to panic the moment he runs out of the entrance and down to the mountains. "Spider'stalk!" Emerald'glare yells at the panicked tom who took off without an explanation. Onyx'foot and Monty would soon pursue him as well.

While running, he could envision the tall pine trees as large cats ran after him. The fire was raining above the mountains, and the sun disappeared in the clouds of ashes that destroyed connections of the spirits to the clans. His sudden shortness of breath from the smell of smoke causes him to choke while breathing and nearly to the point of blacking out. The hot coals burned his paws from every step he takes, it was like if Rusty'claw himself were hunting him down. All that jealousy and revenge was worth the ultimate mission that he was willing to take. If the flames go down, so will everyone else. No one was safe, and it'll all tie back to one cat.

His ears rang, and he found himself lying on the dry dirt. His lungs

ached from the burning pain of the dust being caught in his maw. His tongue is left dry, and he could barely scream for help. He didn't even know if the fires were real or not, all he saw was destruction that follows him everywhere he go, and there was no chance in stopping, until the sun begins to make a presence, the light tearing the clouds apart. All he heard was a raspy voice, calling for him.

"*Spider'stalk*..." The voice speaks to him. "*Spider'stalk*."

The light flickers at the weakened warrior, the cold wind dressing his fur and protecting him from the dreadful voices of **Inferno**. The fires disappeared, the skies went back to normal, and he took him a good bit to realize that all of this was a hallucination. He could see a cave in front of him, harboring a warm, orange stone that shines bright as the sun. The voices were louder than the light that shot from the cave and to the sun itself. Spider'stalk's fur touched the skies, and a fiery aura surrounded him as he was dragged into another realm. The warrior begins to panic, thinking that this might've been the ginger's tricks until he is met with a voice.

"*Do not be afraid, the sun is calling*."

He closes his eyes until he feels pressure on his body. The voice of his ancestor trying to tell him something.

"Look up."

Spider'stalk blinks his eyes, noticing that he is underwater, which he begins to flail his arms and swam upward in about an instant. He sees a white light above him, the subtle noises of the rain hitting the surface. He lifts his head from the water, breathing heavily and staring out at the open land, where a blue-eyed silhouette watches from above the cliff. The realm was dark but tranquil. He could hear the blue ghosts from afar, the ones with wavy lines above their foreheads. The silhouette leaps from the cliff, hovering his flexible body towards the sandy shore, filled with blue crystals and vines that tracked to the large tree hidden in the fog.

"A new visitor." The spirit remarked, his eyes glancing at the tom who was struggling to swim with the waves running rampant. He uses his paws to cool the tides, lowering them in hopes of helping the warrior. Although the ocean was stubborn, it made rumbling noises as it obeyed the spirit's control. *"Oh, don't give me that face."* He scolds the ocean, watching as Spider'stalk drags himself to the sand, coughing the water from his maw. *"You don't greet our guests like that."* He chides before walking towards the warrior. His eyes were left aghast, thinking that he had seen a monster running at him.

*"**Jeffrey?**"* The spirit mouths to the tom, he was shocked.

"Wh-... what?" Spider'stalk says, now lifting his head and staring at the Siamese tom for the first time. Mono stood there, shocked. It was greatly unexpected that the warrior that he once knew hid this from him. Should he be angry? Or should the blame be shifted to the cat? Either way, this was a big problem. "You're his son..." The spirit whispers, his tail swaying lowly now that he was calm, but beyond angry. It wasn't pointed at Spider'stalk, though. "I never knew that he was lying to us this entire time." He shakes his head in disappointment. "What do you mean? Where am **I**... and who are **you?**" Questions fell from his maw; his expression developed his agitation for the unknown. *"You are in **SunClan**."* Mono says, now standing and trotting up from the hill. "Before you ask some more, I'm **Wave'star**, your clan's spirit."

"THE Wave'star!?" Spider'stalk runs next to him. He was amazed yet intimidated by how casual the spirit acted. "*By my acolytes, yes. But to the closest, I go by Mono."*

Spider'stalk is speechless. He was speaking to a powerfully known spirit and the first leader of his clan. He follows him up to the ledge, his paws being caressed by the soft grass and water traveling underneath the cracks. What he noticed in this realm was something unique in a way. He spots Web'star from afar, who was surrounded by his kin of the past. The two shared some warm looks, yet the old leader is still concerned for him. It's just the fact that he never showed it in front of his aunt and uncle. There were also cats surrounding the tree and even praying in their own language.

The symbols painted on the ground, and the use of crystals hanging from the tree. "This land feels..." He hesitated, not really putting the right words of his description. "Tribal."

"That's a way to put it." Mono hops from rock to rock. His agility and strong, muscular legs gave a small hint to the tom. *"I have the blood of both **RiverClan** and **Tribe of the Rushing Water**. We're water and cave loving kitties. I found in uniting them as whole, instead of letting my home go to waste."* The tom guides him to the large willow tree, the long leaves decorated with gems and rocks. Spider'stalk was easily amazed by the land around him. He found this side of SunClan to be calmer and tranquil.

"*I know my ancestors needed to do better than that.*" Mono glances at the warrior. For whatever reason, the appearance had bothered him so much. The spirit felt horrible for not looking at the poor tom all the way.

In the corner of his eyes, Mono could spot a green and silver light in the sky, aiming at the two cats. He could feel a scolding coming from TerraClan's spirit, who was looking for a specific cat. Spider'stalk had already been so distracted from the beauty of the scenery. It was only a matter of seconds until he felt a large boom ahead of him. The waves crashed from disturbance. Mono's eyes darkened. It was clear that the two spirits were looking for him. "Who is that?" Spider'stalk gazes at the fog, covering the two figures that had just landed.

The bitter cold settled in, the eyes of **Breeze'star** glares at Spider'stalk. He found denial in the appearance that he is met with, but he couldn't help but briefly look away to hide his fear and shock.

"Stay by me." Mono reassures him, his eyes glared at the wildcat spirit who was now approaching him. *"The **sunset** needs the cat for the trial."* **Terra'star** responded, her green eyes now glancing at Spider'stalk. His appearance made her heart stop just from the presence of the tom again. She didn't know what to feel or what to say. This was only a part of her duty that she was forced to take in. "*Why should I?"* The spirit asks. His demeanor felt defensive. *"He's barely into being a warrior. Let him rest."*

The Pallas cat growls at the tom, and he retorts in his low, deep voice. *"It's important that **Red'fang** must see him before anything happens. He could have any ideas we won't ever know."*

Spider'stalk had become confused now. What has he done? Was there something more that waited for him? Had it been the drastic mistake of leading Rusty'claw into corruption? Mono's thoughts were conflicted of ever letting this tom go. It was like feeding a sheep to the wolves. It was the sole reason for him avoiding the other spirits in important times such as these. But for the greater good, he had no power over what **Destiny** sees and chooses. This was expected long ago. *"Let me accompany him."* Mono steps forward, his tail blocking Spider'stalk.

"Oh... why should the father of many kits come along with him? He's going to get attached!" Breeze'star complained to Terra'star, who had no problem of his decision. *"He'll come with the tom whatever he pleases."* She glares at the spirit who wanted to reject the option. *"We can carry on without your bickering."*

Breeze'star gave one last look at Spider'stalk. It was obvious that he had despised him from the very start. He scoffs and moves his legs up in the air as the snow and ice trailed behind him, flying off without a word, only the eyes that can tell a thousand of what he truly felt for the small tom. The warrior was left puzzled and intimidated. He looks around, seeing that all the blue spirits begin to part ways. He was slowly starting to catch on. Terra'star watched as the spirit disappeared, she follows along, leaving an aura of fallen green leaves and twigs.

"You're going have to hold me." Mono says, a blue aura swirling over his paws and legs.

"You don't even have to say it twice." Spider'stalk leaps onto his back. His webby paws sticking on the Siamese's fur, it took great interest of Mono into seeing the paws of the warrior. He was more into the RiverClan side, which he suspected. "*You're smart for a young warrior. I'm impressed.*" He moves his shoulders and stretches his legs. *"Hang on!"*

"Oookay.. but if you can **tell** me to where are we even going-"

The small warrior began to scream just as the water spirit took off. His claws instinctively unsheathed and made marks onto his fur, and the clouds and wind hit his face intensely, causing him to spit out any incoming bugs that hit the back of his throat. he could see a large light in the distance, hidden behind the mountains, and the clouds that bordered the heart of SunClan.

Mono moves with high-speed, his flexible body blending into water droplets. "What is wrong with you!?" Spider'stalk shrieks like a kit, hiding behind Mono's back, closing his eyes to avoid looking down. *"I'm telling you to hang on! Maybe take a look out in the fields sometime, and you'll get used to it!"* Said Mono, now running on clouds, watching the warriors of SunClan roaming the tall grasses.

Spider'stalk opens his eyes to see a new world. A tranquil, environment, filled with ancient landmarks and primordial cats that existed long ago. They were gathering prey below the clouds, and the sun gleamed with a melodic whistle of the wind. The light danced on his glossy fur, the prayers were spoken below him, the ghosts under were intrigued as to why their spirits were in such a rush. Their head following the multicolored trails as they gathered fish from the clear river just above the valley. Different statues sit highly above ground. They were unrecognizable to Spider'stalk, but never forgotten by the ghosts who decorated them. They've worshipped the very first founders since sixty-thousand moons ago.

From **Sol** and **Tona** to **Red'fang** and **Blaze'star**, the sun never sets in the mountains and never will from the day it touched the blue skies.

Large birds fled above them. Even animals who ascended into a land of endless lives served as the blessed prey who fed and gave nutrients to their ancestors. They were worshipped and preserved by the circle of life that was bounded to the ancient clan for centuries. Nature was their home, their domain, and their site of prayer. Nature was a gift, and that truly admired the warrior who watched herds of deer frolicked on the flowery fields. But the only odd thing is that the skies were strangely bright. A swirling silver spread across the skies, causing storms to stir close to the clouded borders.

A white line splits the gray clouds, landing right into the tallest mountain where the sunset resides.

"That must've been Bloom'moss!" Mono exclaims, now flying down into the valley. The young warrior's stomach sank from how hard the spirit descended from the skies. He was too distracted from the beautiful scenery of the verdant land that he didn't realize until the dust hit his face. "Good, SunClan!" He leans his head against the spirit's fur, his ears forcefully pinned back, it felt that his entire skin was going to tear off from how fast he was going. He led out a high-pitched scream, the wind booming on both ears now that the spirit was speeding through the stone path. He then makes a sharp turn to the left, causing the warrior to slip from his grip and fall from a rocky ledge into a dark cave, his frightened voice echoing all the way down

A blue light crashed in the cave, not even noticing Spider'stalk falling from his back. The warrior appeared to be groaning in immense pain. His possessor's durability did give him the opportunity to live such a fall. His body twitched, feeling a sharp pain running in his veins before finding balance. He turns his head to look at the remaining two spirits passing by and a crowd of cats.

Spider'stalk turns his head at the mouth of the dark cave. Hearing deepened voices and whispers of cats who spoke about the battle that took place. The destruction of WaveClan camp, and most importantly, the small warrior himself. But, what he noticed was a bright light below the cave, a large opening that led to a large cave where it was believed to be the sunset's domain. He could hear distant voices of him and his companion until it all fade away, leaving him to stare at the pond that kept all the memories of the past, present, and foretelling the future. It was like his own **Opal's Eye**.

The aura it had stole his focus from whatever the sunset wanted from him to the future that is seen in front of him. He lowers himself by slowly climbing from the dangling vines. He jumps down and steps forward to the light. His migraines were still present from the beacon, and his white paw felt like stepping into tiny, sharp rocks on the ground. It also had to draw blood on the inside of his paw pads. Nevertheless, he still gets close to the pond, his upper

body mirroring his reflection. It had an eerie feeling knowing that his reflection was beginning to move places, places such as falling from the sky with fire tearing his pelt down to the red flesh, and then bone.

The vision was dark, dark as the clouds above him with little to no light. His reflection yowled and screeched to what was left of his soul turns into ash.

His pupils enlarged, and his tail thumped anxiously. His body was petrified, and he couldn't move even if he tried. His claws protruded the sharp edges poking outward from the pond. The tears start slipping away from his sunken eyes. His body shifted uncomfortably, his back arching away as he wanted to completely break free from this. His heart throbbed like a grieving soul, forced to look at the deep gashes and scars of a falling star he's soon to be.

"**Spider'stalk!**" A she-cat screams his name, the tom feels someone dragging him away from the darkest pits. He breathes heavily, finding himself drowning again. His body was wet. He didn't even know that he had fallen into the pond. Ghost'breeze wraps her arms around him, silently comforting him from what had even happened at the moment. Her eyes darken when she glances at the vision herself, her heart sinking now that Spider'stalk had found his true purpose. "Spider'stalk, listen to me, are you okay?" She asks him, hoping that nothing bad had happened. His eyes were blank, and his body ran cold. He pushes her out of the way and crawls to the other side.

Ghost'breeze stood up, her tail curled behind her legs, and her ears pinned down. This is where it all comes to, those secrets sliding off like loose bark carrying on with the harsh wind of an already produced storm. "Is this where it all ends?" He spoke coldly to the she-cat and began distancing himself away from her. "You didn't tell me that I was going to **die.**" His brows wrinkled. There was a feeling of betrayal and denial. "I never said that." Ghost'breeze shakes his head, trying to console with the young tom. "I just didn't know, you know that I'm always honest with you, and-.."

"You're a **SunClan** warrior, you should've known." The tom cuts her off, reclaiming his balance and now standing close to the mouth of

the cave. "Don't-.." He hesitated, his heart beating and the tears creating streaks of lines to his endless grief. In the end, he knew only one thing to seal his fate without doing anything further, what he should've done a long time ago. "**Don't** talk to me anymore."

"Spider'stalk?" Ghost'breeze's voice broke, her eyes watering when he began to back away. "Spider'stalk what are you doing?"

The tom didn't answer, he turns away from her and stood on top of the ledge. His eyes turn green as he watches the fog pass below him. The desperate cries of Ghost'breeze were the past now, or so it was.

"Spider'stalk, do you know what **they'll** do to you!?" She runs close to him, her eyes glowing from the overwhelming emotions of potentially losing her only friend.

"I only kept this from you to protect **you**, and now the spirits are expecting you to be seen in the trial now that Rusty'claw is dead!" She cried, wanting to hold him back from running off. He did pity her for a moment. Her anguished expression was triggering his own feelings, but he remained headstrong about this decision. Ghost'breeze still continued, raising her voice out of frustration and hidden trauma. "I should've known that WaveClan leader had brought you into a world where they don't want anything to do with cats like us! I want you to understand that none of this is in my **control**!"

A haunting cry is heard above them, with stars falling and the voice of the sun itself, calling the ghosts of the past to search for the one cat they expected. Quickly, Spider'stalk jumps off the ledge, letting his ancestor carry him onto the lines of wind. His eyes bled green, focusing his escape from the realm. Ghost'breeze yelled his name until he was nowhere to be found. She then jumps off the mountain was well, following the lines of ghosts from each way, lighting the skies in hopes of catching their prey for the territory's life source.

Spider'stalk focused on the clouded borders of the floating realm but ends up being attacked by the white flames who carved their claws onto his sides, causing the tom to stagger. He grunts in pain and begins to spiral on purpose to confuse the ghosts who were

chasing him down. Nothing worked, and the chains around him began to drag him up from the realm and to the sky. He could see Ghost'breeze fighting her way up to the sky, clawing at the ghosts who were following the chains carrying him up to the sun itself. But, she knew nothing of the space above the realm, and she was forbidden to even cross that path, or she'll freeze and die.

The tom was able to survive since the ghosts created a bubble around him, room to breathe. He still wasn't safe from the glaring cold that was agonizing to the bones. He couldn't even cry since the tears would turn to small ice droplets.

The only peace he had in this lifetime was the stars that shined in many distances. The small pebbles in the sky floated freely. It was like a space of endless possibilities that strayed further from an assigned path that they were **destined** to be. It gave him many ideas to what this world meant to him and what other loved ones would be at risk in fault the doomed path. Then, he feels his body temperature drastically changing when closing in to the mighty light of the sun. Everywhere around him turns white as the ghosts bring him to **Solis'** cave.

There, he opens his to be revealed in a cave with many cats of SunClan who sat below the cliffs, observing them carefully. They were the witnesses of the destruction that took place in WaveClan's cave, and what could be the end of everything. They feared that this would be a repeat to the incident of the sunset and his daughter. One's selfishness will affect everything. Nonetheless, they were curious of the mortal tom until noticing his appearance and what had become of what they are now, scared, ignorant, or even hatred.

The crystals in the gnarly trees became radiant, and what was the light at the end of the darkness was the **Great Radiance** themself. Their light never faded off, and SunClan always knew to prevail, even in the harshest times. But even Spider'stalk knew that most weren't happy to what this turns to. Below the ledge were the spots of spirits who lay low and watchful. Terra'star sat at the far left, Mono close to the middle, Breeze'star at the far right, and two missing spots close to the middle.

Behind the crowd, red eyes lurks above the cliff. His emotions are tense, but softening to sadness when he sees the hopeless Spider'stalk, standing in the middle of the mess he indirectly created.

"**Here, this trial is testified against you.**" Solis speaks to him with many voices supporting them. Their paw raises forward, and the middle clearing of the cave emerges a white, glistening pond. Before the tom, he is memories of the past, and with cats that he heard of, especially one who his uncle has spoken of. "**You will not speak against this. You have already caused much damage than there is, especially a kin of yours, that you are not aware of.**"

"I was never **aware** of anything." The black tom growls lowly, shutting the deity off. the chains disappear from his body, but his actions further create pressure within the environment. The ghosts were shocked that he even dared speak over them. The spirits were greatly appalled of his attitude. *"Don't interrupt them."* Breeze'star chided, his puffy striped tail lashing behind him. *"It'll make everything harder than it seems."* His thoughts grew pity over the tom, his voice softening as an attempt to calm the tension. "Then let it **be!**" Spider'stalk yells at the spirit. "I've been **tormented** in this territory for **moons** because of something I've done to have this cursed name I'm known as!"

"You were known for a reason," Terra'star added. *"To explain this to you, we wouldn't know how you'll take it."*

The spirits could feel the watchful eyes of the **Absolute**, silently pressuring them to admit the past and what was left behind in fear. "Then tell me **now!**" Spider'stalk steps forward, his two front paws slamming on the ground, his voice breaking down to begging sobs of a tom who had seen too much. Still, the spirits had no strength, and they turned their heads to the **Great Radiance** who scoffed in disappointment. "**You call yourself spirits, and yet you couldn't have the strength to say anything?**" The deity scolded them. "**Pathetic.**"

"You are pathetic!" Mono's voice rang from the side, standing up to the deity who snaps their head at him. *"You let this tom be in pain*

*and let my warriors push him down like some hare. I wanted to intervene, but all of this was your plan of **destiny** for **him.**"* His voice is cold and unforgiving. He was tired of keeping his maw shut for the last few moons. *"You should speak to him and see him break down like what **you** wanted!"* His tail thumps the ground, causing a large thud that made some of the cats jump. **The Absolute** was unamused. "**Oh, what a pity.**" The deity rolls their eyes. "**I have to do all the work for you. That's sad, isn't it?**" He turns to Spider'stalk with a taunting tone, hiding the anger they had for him.

"**A sad thing to let it all burn down just to protect someone like you. Isn't that what your father wanted?**"

"What?" Spider'stalk stopped, taking short breaths when he heard the mention of his father.

The sunset is still hidden in the shadows, his heart beating nonstop. Peter hides behind the rock with him, his pupils narrowing at Spider'stalk, the tom whom he introduced clan culture to. Then, when hearing what the **Great Radiance** had to say, I left him aghast. Red'fang, however, knew. "**You heard me.**" They raise their paw, churning the waves of the pond to the memories of the lost WaveClan deputy. "**Humor me, do you remember the story of what your uncle said? Hm? About how he did the unthinkable?**"

Spider'stalk wanted to snark at the deity, but stopping himself and pondering on the story his uncle told before he died. That's when he slowly began to realize that his entire life was a lie. The fire stops blazing, and his body goes limp at the feeling of realizing that after all this time, Crow'stalk is the broken father in that Softpaw house. A light shines at the dark corner, where Red'fang and Peter are caught. The sunset blinded by it falls behind as he hisses in irritation. Peter stopped, his eyes dilating, and his tail standing still. The young tom turns around, his expression darkening further the moment he sees the face of the leader whom he helped and trusted.

"You **knew?**" Spider'stalk spoke to him, a number of gasps spread like a shockwave. The ghosts finally had closure, but at what cost? Peter didn't know what to say. "You were the son of my old deputy, I **had** to distance **myself** from you."

"You should've just left me in the house." Spider'stalk murmured under his breath, closing his eyes. He turns around to face his body at the right side of the cave. He opens to peek a glance at the sunset warrior who hid in the shadows. "And this is what the sunset wants, huh? To break someone to where they can't be themselves anymore!"

Those words hit Red'fang like a monster. Still, he couldn't hide in the dark forever. He knew that this was going to happen sooner later, and it was partially his fault to begin with. He steps forward, his face cold and calculated. His tallness expresses his individual power, and not by complete dominance, something more valuable than what the deity prioritizes. *"You think everyone is against you, but no, I was **hidden** in the sidelines, keeping that **everything** your **father** had with him away from you! I was the **one** who helped him **escape!"*** He slams his paw down, causing the cave to tremble, and the white pond flickering. The spirits were shocked, and the deity was left aghast by this sudden action.

Red'fang's eyes were like flames staring down at whom he thought had it all with a new life SunClan was blessed in.

In reality, he was being used, just like the past in Stone'star possession.

"*You think I wanted the worst of everyone so they can suffer like I did? You're **wrong!"*** He moves to the top of the ledge, his voice broadcasting his inner stress and pain that he held in him for the stability of his true home. *"Look at it, look at you. We are like* **StarClan**. *There will be no difference unless you let us be free. We're playing responsibilities here, not **tyranny!"***

The Absolute's eyes widen at this reveal, the tension growing chaotic, and their pupil bled red. "**So you lied to me,**" They said, their eyes shrinking from a moment of shock. Solis' paws stiffens, and their tail began to lash and whip at the remaining vines behind him. "**..you had all this time to tell me.**"

*"I **did.**"* The tom icily responded, nearly out of breath from his outburst. *"And by order, I want you to let him go. His father is **dying.**"*

"My.. **my father?**" Spider'stalk backs away, his breathing quickens when he is told by the news. Everything changes quickly when he realizes who he is fighting for. He fought for his life, but now he wants to fight for his father's. The softpaw tom did everything he could to protect his son. To lose him is to lose everything. His life had depended on him from the start, and he didn't want to leave it meaningless. "When does it happen.." The tom murmurs, before outward yelling at the deity who only watched with their own judgment. "**When does it happen!?**"

"*When.. the sun drowns."* Red'fang says, his anger breaking down to vulnerability and shared empathy. He was already in pain from losing his daughter, and now he'll be losing what he called his son. ***"He will take on his last breath."***

"**NO!**" Spider'stalk shrilled, the pond below him turning green, as well as the light that is controlled by his grief. The cave shakes even further, causing the stalactites to crack and fall. The ghosts were growing concerned and began to flee when they felt the cave groaning and cracking from the inside. "**I HAVE TO GO HELP HIM!**" The tom cried out to the deity, who quickly raised their paw and forced the tom down. The chains quickly embed him to the ground, as he made his attempt to fight them off. "**You will not.**" Solis commanded, making the chains enclose on him and making the tom suffocate. "**You will stay, under no circumstances will I let you shatter your destiny!**"

"**Let him go!**" Many of the crowd began to call at their ruler, even Peter who pleaded at the deity. The spirits couldn't say anything except Mono, who joined in on the protest. This was like torture in the eyes. **The Absolute** turns their paw the other way, chanting a spell that worked for spirit to obey their command. But one had silently learned to rebel against it. "**He is a shattered destiny. He'll be like his father!**" Solis yelled, increasing their harsher rule to those who turned away from the light. They were even brutal enough to control their bodies, making the poor spirits twist and turn in pain and let the light rise within them.

This had gone too far, Spider'stalk sobbed on the cold ground as the protests of the ghosts continued. He was starting to lose it, and so was the sunset.

He was tired of seeing everyone in pain, and it was all because of him. It wasn't no partially. He let his ancestors take over and turn everyone's lives upside down. Red'fang voice is low and thunderous, the red flames surrounding his body. The sun on his back creates an aura matching the deity's brightness. The power that countered with their pride and power they've had over the realm for twelve hundred moons.

This was his last straw.

"YOU WON'T TAKE HIM!"

The sunset lets out the biggest cry, stepping onto the ground and yelling at the deity, causing parts of the cave to collapse, and created a deep, large crack that formed like a gorge that splits the middle of cave.

His power-fueled screams knock everyone back, even the deity who felt their influence staggering.

The chains were broken apart in an instant, knocking Spider'stalk back.

There is silence.

Chapter **45**

The cave is silenced by the unexpected cry.

Both Spider'stalk's ears rang, and his vision got blurry. He was able to open his eyes to see a ruined cave in front of him, with Solis gripping their chest where their celestial heart thudded intensely. The tom then makes a breakthrough by running out of the cave and into the darkness. **The Absolute's** voice calls an order, with the loudest yowl of what appeared to be fear and anger in their eyes.

"GET HIM!"

The ghosts and the possessed spirits obliged, going after the running tom. Red'fang jumps off of the cliff, and fled alongside with Spider'stalk. The young tom felt his body floating when he sees the stars in the distance. The voice of Scourge lingers in his mind as he immediately felt the harsh cold and his breathing being cut abruptly. *"Know your enemy, **don't** let them win."*

He falls into the black void where the stars shined brighter than the last time he saw them. There were cold, gray vines began to appear and wrap tightly around him. His nostrils were blocked, and he choked from the breathless space around him. His body numbs from the intense cold that froze his body to one place. The vines quickly drag him back to the possessed TerraClan who stretched her paws out and controlled it. Before anything further happened to the tom, a shooting star flew between them, knocking Terra'star over.

Spider'stalk uses his arms to reach between the vines and tear through the roots with his claws. His body floated around as he makes an attempt to fly back. But it had gotten difficult since he could barely breathe. He was at the edge of passing out from the lack of air, and potentially dying from it. Fortunately, Red'fang had fought enough of the ghosts to seek Spider'stalk's body and wrap his arms around it, flying back to land mother. The spirits fled on each side, the voice of the Great Radiance taunting the sunset who carried the unconscious tom to the white layers, and soon into

SunClan's realm.

"**You're a traitor!**" Their voice came out of Breeze'star's mouth, using his muscles to cling onto the tom and slow him down. "**You want to destroy what we've made together!? Is this how you want to end!?**"

"**Yes!**" Red'fang scars Breeze'star's face, shoving him away from his back as his other arm protected Spider'stalk's body. "**You lied to me, you lied to everyone! I walked beside you to create our pantheon to keep order of SunClan at a balance, yet you created what we wanted to destroy in the first place!**"

The tom pushes forward, flying through the clouded barriers. The ocean below the realm began to rumble. The voice of Solis rang from Wave'star's maw as the ocean began to churn and create harsh waves that touched the high skies. The dark clouds beginning to appear the moment Red'fang sees the dark blue surface underneath the dense fog. "**You walked beside me..**" Solis repeated, stuck in disbelief of what he wanted to believe is true. "**I wanted what was best for you and for SunClan. Destiny is what lies in all of us, to destroy it would destroy everything in your path as well! Do you not know what you're fighting for!?**" Their voice grows into a blend of grief and desperation. The voices of the ancestors turning into high shrills that affected Red'fang's eardrums. The waves trembled and created high tides that nearly drowned the cats who were watching a red star falling through the sky.

"**Do you want those rogues to kill our cats just as what happened at the very beginning, Sun Fall? Have your pride blinded you from the light!?**"

"**NO!**" Red'fang yelled as he flew between the high waves, the winds throwing him off his path to guide the small tom in his paws. "**I choose freedom over control! You will not let him lose his father!**"

He could see the sun setting in the mountains, and feel small movement in his arms to see the disoriented tom trying to regain his conscious. Spider'stalk fluttered his eyes, his hammering heart stopping when he sees the light creating a path into the western

side. His claws clung onto the brown tom's fur, his eyes silently pleading him to let go. Red'fang didn't know if anything was safe for him to continue on. When he saw Crow'stalk fly away, he had a plan of his own that he couldn't interfere.

But with his son, it was either to fight or run.

However, Red'fang noticed many stars lingering in the sky, that followed the silver moon above the dark clouds. Jade'moon and the sunrise led a rebellion against Solis for a long time, and now it's time. The moon warrior raises her paw to lower the waves and pull the tides. The face of Solis appeared in the skies, and the possessed spirits close in on the sunset. Red'fang took one last look at Spider'stalk, reluctantly releasing him from his paws. *"Go and save him, I'll handle the rest."*

His words were oddly paternal to the young tom. He had many celestials that were on his side as he turns around to see Blaze'star actively fighting the spirits and the ghosts that were lured away by the darkness the moon warrior had created. He couldn't deny that it was a beautiful sight, the stars aligning with each other in many paths. The ghosts of the Night realm had chosen their own fate in life, what they were blessed is what lies above their assigned paths. Peace, independence, and freedom.

If that's what lied ahead for the tom, he'll keep going without turning back, and he did.

Red'fang fought alongside his brother, and Jade'moon. But, all eyes were on him as the paw of light is raised above the rainy clouds.

"You leave me no choice!"

In the flash of divine judgement, a lightning is struck onto Red'fang's side. It causes the tom to lose balance, and the control over his stunned body. His power stripped from him as the world is tilt upside down. All he saw was the light fading from the clouds. The eyes of the Absolute is all he can see, he couldn't talk nor could he cry. The pain stung him like a poisonous bite of endless adders, but the venom did not kill him. His muscles weakened, and his eyes rolled back. From how loyal he became of Solis to falling from

grace, he couldn't say that he regret it. As the myth tells, he will find himself to be thrown into a lake of flames, the one that he sparked in the first place.

There was no point in fighting back for what he believed, he knew that he had won by heart when he sees the green streak fly somewhere into the deep forest, where the sunset shines on Spider'stalk's glossy backside.

The Evening Star takes his fall, with his paws touching the clouds one last time.

All he could see is the burnt orange in front of him, with the flames of Blaze'star firing towards the light to keep them away from the green fiery stripe that trailed across the skies.

Red'fang blacks out.

Smoke veiled the skies into hazy orange.

The rain settling in as the tom had taken his last few breaths. Jeffrey heard the cries of Carmen, gripping his body close to her. She couldn't believe that the sickness had gotten worse and infected the insides as what the cutter had spoken of the other day. His coughed-up blood stained the towels, his eyes glinted the color of vibrant to pale yellowish orange. It was far too late now, his legacy has been tainted, he was destined to suffer.

The young Dandelion watched, thinking that Lee and **Sunflower** were now dead. But she points out a green light in the skies, a cat that she could barely remember, except for the eyes that she saw in her father, to her brother. "Sunflower?" She mouths his name, her legs now leaning onto the ledge of the window. "Sunflower!" She shouted, her voice catching the attention of Carmen and Jeffrey. The two briefly let go of one another as the mother ran out in the cat door, seeing that her son had come back for them.

The flying tom landed below the ledge, his legs powerfully running against the thick, muddy grounds, desperate to save his father. He

was relieved to see that Dandelion and Carmen was still alive, but seeing his weakened father laying onto the bed, it made him run faster. Reaching into the small cat door, trailing mud and dry blood onto the soft floor, he ran to his father in a sobbing mess. Jeffrey, who was weak to his excitement, found his paws embracing the tom.

"Pa... pa I'm here!" Spider'stalk wailed to the tom, his tears were uncontrollable. The scars on his body meant nothing to him now that his father, who he regretted leaving, was now dying onto his paws. Jeffrey could barely move, his eyes slowly blinking, he found his body becoming limp and cold. But he had to muster up the strength to un-do all the harm that he had caused for the family. He could feel his heart crying to his son, the scars that terrified him now that this was all his **fault**. Spider'stalk's ears rested onto the Softpaw's chest, hearing that his heart is slowing down.

He began to panic and even yowl loudly to get the attention of the two-legs who were well aware of Jeffrey's limited life, but even that couldn't save him from his fate.

"...Sunny..." Jeffrey spoke to him, his nose resting onto the tom's paws, comforting him.

"I'm sorry."

Epilogue

BOOTS.. BOOTS.. BOOTS... BOOTS.

Cinder'speck found herself in a land of destruction, she saw her former mentor being burned by the monstrous blazes. Her clan, her family, being torn apart as the fire spreads on all of the territories. She ran across the clearing, the trees falling down as it nearly caught her leg underneath the hot burnt wood. She had to hold her breath, trying to limit the smoke inhalation as the fire became unstoppable, it was even worser when even Wave'star himself couldn't even handle the power that **Inferno** had over the territories.

The gray she-cat could never forget the screams of the burned, the kits that were stuck under the debris and left to die. The cats that were desperate of running away, even the rogues who had realize what they've done to the ginger tom. Her paws burned against the hot grass, the skies being covered by the thick ashy fog, and the rain stinging her scars as she kept on going. The paws of Storm'strike's rogues trying to catch the remaining warriors were forever burned into her mind. The territory was falling, and there was nothing she could do to stop it.

She did end up following a group of clans fleeing to BreezeClan. The elders as well, being told to guide the vulnerable up and above, she ends up following the group, on a hurry to leave the place of the damned, where **Inferno** had sworn to have his revenge, which he succeeded. The mewls of the innocent continued, some cats even had to let others die for their own good since saving was nothing but a lost cause. The training cave that she once saw herself in those moons ago, were destroyed and burned to ash.

The lakes were red, and locusts swarmed the forests. Animals were forced to flee, even the helpless critters who watched their hard-worked homes burn into the ground. Cinder'speck carefully learned

this pattern, since the son of the crow warrior had left the clans and promised to never return after what the spirits had done to him and his family. As what she always remembers from the prophecy, **the clans will burn over the death of the broken-hearted**.

She was then brought into the training lake, where the two medicine, cats were easing their pains with the water that was gifted by WaveClan's spirit. Smoke'shade was squeezing the cold moss onto Cinder'speck's scars, while she watched the fires ignite the skies. The eyes of **Inferno** watching his creation succeeding. The warriors were left with no hope, some were even thinking about leaving the territories and never return. Cinder'speck thought the opposite. There was hope, hope for the warrior to come back, and hope that the clans will be set free from the invisible chains of the past that held them back.

The she-cat knows now that the era of the sun has been put to an end.

The **Dark Age** is what lies in the future for all clans.

Edit: I didn't think a small audience would read some of these books since its more for experimental purposes.

But all that put aside, thanks for reading :).